26-1-7

THE BOOKS OF

Job, *Proverbs*,
Pſalms, *Eccleſiaſtes*,
And the *Song of Solomon*,

PARAPHRAS'D:

WITH

ARGUMENTS to each CHAPTER,
And ANNOTATIONS thereupon.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
SYMON Patrick, Late Lord Biſhop of ELY.

LONDON:
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THE

BOOKS

OF

26. 1.

To the Right Honourable

WILLIAM,

Earl of *BEDFORD*,

Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the Garter, *&c.*

My very good Lord and Patron.

My Lord,

THOUGH I have not purſued the Deſign, which I have long had in my Thoughts, of making ſome publick Acknowledgement of my Obligations to your Lordſhip, for placing me, when I thought not of it, in this Station which I hold in Covent-Garden; *yet I have only deferred it, till the moſt proper Opportunity, as it ſeems to me, for this ſmall Expreſſion of my Gratitude. For I could not have prefixed your Lordſhip's Name to any Work of mine, which I believe would have been ſo acceptable, as this wherewith I now preſent you; deſiring it may remain as a laſting Teſtimony of the Senſe I have of the Favours I have received from your Lordſhip. In whom, as I have always obſerved, a particular Veneration and Affection for the holy Scriptures; ſo I know to be a conſtant Reader of them: And therefore humbly offer this Aſſiſtance to your Lordſhip, for the underſtanding of the oldeſt Book, (as I have ſhown) of that Sacred Volume, which, I am confident, you eſteem above all earthly Treaſures.*

There have been many large Volumes written for its Explication; which will coſt abundance of Time and Pains to peruſe; and after all, the Deſign and Scope of the Whole may not be underſtood, while the Reader's Mind ſtays ſo long, in the ſeveral Parts. I have therefore taken quite another Courſe, and only given the Senſe of it in a Compendious, but perſpicuous Paraphraſe, *(or* Metaphraſe *rather, as the Ancients would have called it) which is not much longer than the Text, put into other Words. It would have been more eaſie to have inlarged it, than it was to make it thus ſhort; which I the rather choſe to do, not merely becauſe it will be more uſeful for thoſe who have little leiſure, or leſs Money; but becauſe thereby I have preſerved, I perſwade my ſelf, the Majeſty of the Book; and made it ſtill look, not like the Word of a Man, but, as it is indeed, the Word of God.*

Which I could never have preſented to your Lordſhip and the World, more ſeaſonably than now; when the State of our Affairs is ſo dangerouſly perplexed, that we cannot ſtand upright, nor preſerve our Souls from ſinking into the ſaddeſt Fears, or Diſ-

contents, or ſome ſuch troubleſome Paſſion, without a ſtrong Confidence in the moſt Wiſe, Juſt, and Merciful Providence of the Almighty; which orders Things, in unſearchable Ways, to the Good of thoſe that ſtedfaſtly adhere unto him, in faithful Obedience. Which is ſo admirably repreſented in this holy Book, that one cannot read it ſeriouſly, and not be moved to reſign the Conduct of our ſelves, and all that concerns us, unto God's moſt bleſſed Will and Pleaſure; to wait patiently for him, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, and keep his Way; not to be diſheartned by any Trouble that befals us, much leſs forſake our Integrity; but ſtill expect the End of the Lord, *as St.* James *ſpeaks*, i. e. *the Iſſue to which he will bring our Troubles; perſwading our ſelves that he is* very pitiful, and of tender Mercy. *And therefore, as he doth not love to grieve us by laying Afflictions on us; ſo is wont many Times to bring the greateſt Good out of the greateſt Evil; and to produce it by ſuch unexpected Means, as ſhall ſurprize us with the greater Admiration of his Wiſdom and Goodneſs.*

For a great Reader of Ancient Writers tells us, " *He hath obſerved, in the Hiſtories* " *of all Ages, that the great Events which determine the Fate of great Affairs, do* " *happen leſs frequently according to Deſign, than by Accident and Occaſion. Our* " *Enterprizes here below are deriv'd from above; and we but Engines and Actors* " *of Pieces that are compoſed in Heaven.* Homo hiſtrio, Deus vero Poeta eſt. " *God is the Sovereign Poet, and we cannot refuſe the Part which he appoints us* " *to bear in the Scene. All our Buſineſs is to act it well; chearfully complying with* " *his Orders concerning us, and ſubmitting our ſelves to the Direction of his Pro-* " *vidence.*

To which, and all other Religious Courſes, did we more heartily apply our ſelves, there is no doubt but that in this Book we might read God's gracious Intentions towards this Church and Kingdom. Which his moſt merciful Providence would bring, as he did his Servant Job, *through all theſe Clouds which now incompaſs us, into a Splendor incomparably beyond all that, wherein hitherto we have appeared. Why ſhould we deſpair of it, when he ſhews, by the unexpected Diſcovery which he hath made, of the Deſigns of our Enemies againſt us, that he hath no Mind to caſt us off; if we will not careleſly caſt away our ſelves, by the continual Neglect of our Duty to him?*

God of his infinite Goodneſs awaken all our Hearts, to make ſuch a good Uſe both of that Deliverance, and of our preſent Diſtreſs (which is ſo great, that we ſee no Way out of it, but by his Power alone to whom Job *owed his Reſurrection) that we may, in the Iſſue, be the more happy, and the better eſtabliſhed, for having been ſo miſerably unſettled. In which Prayer, I am ſure your Lordſhip will cordially joyn with,*

MY LORD,

April 29. 79.

Your Lordſhip's

moſt Humble and

Affectionate Servant,

Sy. Patrick.

26 I. 7

THE PREFACE.

THE Study of the Holy Scriptures is ſo much recommended to us by the Scriptures themſelves, and hath been judged ſo neceſſary by the holy Doctors of the Church, that St. *Chryſoſtome* (who was wont to preſs this Duty with great Earneſtneſs, not only in his Sermons, but in his private Diſcourſes with his People) adventures to ſay, * That *a Man cannot, he cannot be ſaved, unleſs he be converſant in this ſpiritual reading.* But as the Neglect of them is very dangerous, when Men are able to read them; ſo the reading them without Underſtanding, muſt needs be unprofitable. Though a Chriſtian (as the forenamed great Perſon ſpeaks) can no more be without the Scriptures, than an Artificer without his Tools; yet we muſt acknowledge, that he will make but ill Work with them in many Places, unleſs he be inſtructed how to uſe and apply them to the Purpoſe for which they were deſigned. Whoſoever therefore ſhall aſſiſt the Minds of Chriſtians, by giving a clear Meaning of them (in which that holy Father imployed much of his Time) it is certain, doth great Service to God, and to their Souls. For this contributes much to the Honour of the Holy Scriptures (which want nothing to make them reverenced by conſidering Men, but to be underſtood) and it invites Men to the reading them, and it conveys the heavenly Truth eaſily and delightfully into their Minds.

Which hath moved me to attempt the explaining of the moſt ancient Book in the whole Bible, by way of a ſhort Paraphraſe. In which if I have not always tyed my ſelf to our *Engliſh* Tranſlation (which ever gives an excellent Senſe of the Orignal Words) it was becauſe I thought another Meaning ſometimes more agreeable to the whole Diſcourſe; which I have endeavoured to carry on coherently from firſt to laſt. But if the matter would bear it, I have, when I met with a Word of two Senſes, expreſſed them both. And where I found any Difficulty, I conſulted with ſuch Interpreters as are of beſt Note in the Church; being unwilling to do any Thing without the Warrant of ſome or other of them. I was forced indeed here and there to follow only my own Judgment; but not without the Appearance of very urgent Reaſons; of which if I ſhould give an Account,

* *Hom.* 3. *in Lazar. Tom.* V. 243.

Account, by adding Notes to those Places, it would make this, which I intend for common Use, swell into too big a Volume. I have only therefore (in the Argument prefixed to each Chapter) pointed to such Histories in the Bible as may help to illustrate some Passages; and shewn how the Dispute is managed, till God himself determine it.

But there are two Things, of which I think my self bound to give a larger Account; to avoid the Imputation of such Novelty, as may be justly censured. The *One* is, That I have interpreted those three known Verses in the XIX. Chapter, 25, 26, 27. not of *Job*'s Resurrection from the Dead at the last Day, but of his Restauration to an happy Estate in this World; after he had been so sorely afflicted. There are many, of no mean esteem, (Mr. *Calvin* amongst the rest) who have done so before me; in following whom, I do not forsake the Sense of the ancient Doctors. For though I take that to be the literal Sense of the Words, yet I doubt not there is another more secret and hidden, which lies covered under them; and that we ought to look upon *Job*'s Restauration (and so I have always explained it) as a notable Type of the future Resurrection of our Bodies out of the Grave. And accordingly our Church hath very fitly applied the Words (as many of the Fathers do) to this purpose, in the Office for the Burial of the Dead.

St. *Hierom* (or the Author of the Commentaries upon *Job* under his Name) is my Guide in this Business: who saith no more than this, that *Job* in these Words, *resurrectionem futuram prophetat in Spiritu*, propheseth in the Spirit the future Resurrection. Now the Words of the Prophets had commonly an immediate Respect to some thing which was then doing, or shortly to be done, besides that Sense which the Holy Ghost directed them to signify in the latter Days. And so had these Words of *Job*; of which that Father indeed gives us only the mystical Sense, but he doth so in many other Places of that Book, where it is certain and acknowledged, the Holy Man had another meaning, in which he was more nearly concerned. I shall refer the Reader only to one Place in the *First* Chapter; where he saith, that *Job* did *ferre typum Christi* *, and therefore expound those Words, *ver.* 20, 21. in this manner, *He fell on the Ground when he emptied himself of the Form of God, to take on him the Form of a Servant; and came naked out of his Mother's Womb, being not aspersed with the least Spot of Original Sin.* He that will may read what follows, and see how he only sets down a mystical Sense, when it is certain another (upon which that is built) is first intended. And so we are to take his Exposition upon these Words, which *secundum mysticos intellectus* (as he speaks XXXVIII. 16.) *according to the hidden Interpretations*, are to be understood of the Resurrection of the Dead at the second Coming of Christ; but relate in the first Place to *Job*'s Resurrection out of that miserable Condition wherein he lay, which was a Figure of the other. "They therefore "who interpret these Words otherways (to speak with that Father in his Com- "mentaries upon *Ezekiel* XXXVII. 1, *&c.*) ought not to make me ill thought "of, as if by expounding them in the literal Sense only, I took away a Proof "of the Resurrection from the Dead. For I know there are far stronger Testi- "monies (of which there can be no doubt nor dispute) to be found for the "Confirmation of that Truth. On those let us rely, on the plain Words of him "who is the Truth (and of whom *Job* was but a Figure) which are abundantly suf- "ficient to support our Faith; and let none imagine, that we *give occasion to* "*Hereticks* (as he speaks presently after) *if we deny these Words to be meant* "*of the general Resurrection.*

The *Second* Thing of which I am to give an Account is, that I have not expounded *Behemoth* to signify the *Elephant*, nor *Leviathan* to signify the *Whale*; because

* *And so he saith in his Preface*, Figuram Christi portavit. *And in his Conclusion*, XLII. 14. Figuram manifestè habuit Salvatoris.

becauſe many of their Characters do not agree to them; but every one of them to the Deſcription which the Writers of Natural Hiſtory have given of two other Creatures. And therefore I have herein followed the Guidance of that excellent Critick *Bochartus*, who takes the former for the *River-horſe*, and the latter for the *Crocodile*; as I have expreſſed it in the Margin, but put neither of them in the Text. For I leave every one, as our Tranſlators have done, to apply the Words to any other Creatures, if they can find any beſides thoſe now mention'd which have all the Qualities that are here aſcribed to them.

I have adventured alſo in the beginning to add a few Words, as the Manner of Paraphraſts is, to give an Account of the Time when *Job* lived, which ſeems to have been before *the Children of Iſrael* came out of *Egypt*. For though there be plain Mention of the Drowning of the *Old World*, and the Burning of *Sodom*, in this Book; yet there is no Alluſion to the drowning of *Pharaoh*, and other miraculous Works which attended their Deliverance. Nor is there any Notice taken of that Revelation of God's Will to *Moſes*, when *Elihu* reckons up thoſe Ways whereby God was wont to diſcover himſelf to Men. Such like Reaſons moved *Origen* * to ſay, that *Job* was δεχαιότερος ἢ Μωσέως αὐτῶ, *more ancient than even* Moſes *himſelf*; and *Euſebius* † to pronounce that he was *before Moſes two whole Ages*. Which is conformable to the Opinion of many of the Hebrew Writers, who (as Mr. *Selden* obſerves ‖) think *Job* lived in the Days of *Iſaac and Jacob*. The Judgment of other Eaſtern People is not much different from this, as may be ſeen in *Hottinger*'s *Smegna Orientale* *.

And therefore one Uſe we may make of this Book is, to inform our ſelves what are the true natural Dictates of humane Reaſon; which teaches greater Chaſtity than many Chriſtians are now willing to obſerve; ſtrict Juſtice, both private and publick; compaſſionate Charity to thoſe who are in need; together with a pious Care to pleaſe God, and to worſhip and confide in him alone; as we may learn here better than from any other Book in the World. For in the XXXI. Chapter, *Job* gives ſuch a Character of his Life, with Reſpect to all theſe, as declares both that there is a Law written in our Hearts, and what Inſtructions it gives us, if we will attend to it. There is not the leaſt Syllable that we read concerning his being Circumciſed, or obſerving the Sabbath, or ſuch like Parts of the Moſaical Diſcipline, which aſſures us he was neither a natural *Iſraelite*, nor a *Proſelyte* (as St. *Auſtin* ſpeaks †) and yet he found ſuch a Rule of Life in himſelf, that, by the Aſſiſtance of the Divine Grace, he ordered not only his outward Actions, but the inward Motions of his Mind after ſuch a Manner, as is *not unſuitable to the Evangelical Doctrine of our Saviour*. They are the Words of *Euſebius* in the Place forenamed; where he doth not fear to add, that *the Word of Chriſt hath publiſhed to all Nations that moſt ancient Manner of Godlineſs which was among the firſt Fathers; ſo that the* New-Covenant *is no other than that old godly Polity, which was before the Times of* Moſes; I may add, before the Time that *Abraham* was Circumciſed; when, as St. *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks very ſignificantly ‖ ἀρκεῖ ἀντὶ τοῦ νόμου τὸ συνειδὸς ἢ λογισμὸς, *Their Conſcience and the Uſe of Reaſon ſufficed inſtead of the Law.*

The Hebrew Books indeed are full of Diſcourſes concerning certain Precepts, which all Mankind after the Flood obſerved, but cannot all of them be deduced from the Principles of Reaſon. They call them the VII. *Precepts* of the Sons of *Noah*; who delivered them, they ſay, to all his Children, by whom the World was Peopled; and therefore the *Iſraelites* ever exacted the Obſervance of them from all thoſe *Gentiles*, whom they admitted as Proſelytes at large to their Religion. *Two* of thoſe Precepts concerned their Duty toward the bleſſed

* *Lib.* I. *contra Celſum, p.* 305. † *Lib.* I. *Demonſtr. Evangel. Cap* 6. ‖ *Lib.* VII. *De Jure Nat. &c. Cap.* 11. * *Pag.* 381, 452, 453. † *Lib.* XVIII. *Cap.* 47. *De Civit. Dei.* ‖ *Upon Rom.* II. 14.

Creator; the next *Four* respected their Duty towards their Neighbours; the *Last* forbad Cruelty towards other Creatures. They are reckoned up commonly in this Order. I. Concerning *Strange Worship*, or Idolatry. II. About *Blaspheming the Name of God.* III. About *Murder.* IV. About the *uncovering of Nakedness*, or all filthy Mixtures. V. About *Theft and Rapine.* VI. About *Judicatures* and Civil Government; to make the other Precepts more carefully observed. VII. About *not eating of any Flesh which is cut off from any Animal alive.* The Authors that treat of these are innumerable; among whom I shall only mention *Maimonides*; who thus delivers his Opinion of them in his Treatise of *Kings*, Chap. IX.

" *Adam* the first Man received Commands about *Six* Things (which are " those first above mentioned) from whence it is, that the Mind of Man inclines " more pronely to them, than to the rest of the Commands which we have re- " ceived from our Master *Moses.* Besides these, it is manifest, *Noah* received " another, according to what we read IX. Gen. 4. *Flesh with the Life thereof* " *you shall not eat.* And thus Things stood throughout the whole World un- " til the Days of *Abraham*; to whom there was superadded the Precept of " Circumcision.

But as there is not the least Sign that Circumcision was Part of *Job*'s Religion, so there is no Footstep at all remaining of his Observance of the last of those VII. Precepts, which they say all the Sons of *Noah*, who were pious, carefully obeyed. A great Man of our own Nation * hath sifted this Business with as much Diligence as is possible; but after all his search, he is fain to stop at those first *Six* Precepts delivered to *Adam.* For though this general Character be given of *Job* in the Beginning of the Book, that he was a perfect, or simple and upright Man, fearing God, and eschewing Evil; and in the XXXI. Chapter, and other Places, there are particular Instances given of his abhorring *strange Worship*, (v. 26.) *Blasphemy*, (Chap. I. 5.) *Murder*, (XXXI. 29, 31.) *Adultery*, and other filthiness, (*Ib.* v. 1, 9.) *Theft*, Rapine and Deceit, (v. 5, 6, 7.) for the Punishment of which he mentions *Judges* in his Days, (v. 11, 28.) and was himself one of the Chief; (XXIX. 11.) yet here is not so much as one Word to be found, that I can discern, concerning the *Seventh* Precept; whether we understand thereby eating Flesh with the Blood in it; or, which is more likely, (because other Nations that were not Jews, might lawfully eat that which died of it self, XIV. *Deut.* 21.) eating that which was cut alive from any living Creature.

Which makes me think that it was not so generally known, as the Jews now pretend; till the Memory of it was revived by *Moses*, among whose Ancestors the Tradition was more carefully preserved, than in other Nations. For *Job*, and such like pious Persons, seem to have been governed by those Precepts only which the first Man received; that is, the Dictates of natural Reason. According to those Words of *Tertullian*, in his Book against the Jews: Where he contends, † that *before the Law of* Moses *written in Tables of Stone, there was a Law not written, which was naturally understood, and observed by the Fathers:* Which he elsewhere calls the *Common Law, which we meet withal in* publico Mundi, *in the Streets and High-ways of the World, in the natural Tables*; which Mankind having broken, our Saviour came to repair and renew; abrogating the Law of *Moses*, in which the Jews had placed too much Confidence, while they neglected these natural Precepts. Or rather, He hath not only ingaged us by his holy Sacraments to observe those more strictly, but raised them also to a greater Height of Purity; according to that of St. *Chrysostome*, in his Book of Virginity: *We are to shew greater Vertue, because now there is an abundant Grace poured out; and great is the Gift of the Coming of Christ.*

But

* *Mr.* Selden, *L. ult. de Jure Naturali, &c. Cap.* II. † *Chap.* 2.

But the principal Benefit (to omit the naming of many other whereby I might recommend this Work) which I hope pious Souls, eſpecially the *Afflicted*, will reap by this Book, is to be perſwaded thereby that all Things are ordered and diſpoſed by Almighty God; without whoſe Command or Permiſſion, neither good Angels, nor the Devil, nor Men, nor any other Creature, can do any Thing. And that as his Power is infinite, ſo is his Wiſdom and Goodneſs; which is able to bring Good out of Evil. And therefore we ought not to complain of him in any Condition, as if he neglected us, or dealt hardly with us; but rather chearfully ſubmit our ſelves to his bleſſed Will; which never doth any Thing without Reaſon, though we cannot alway comprehend it. To that Iſſue God himſelf at laſt brings all the Diſpute between *Job* and his Friends; repreſenting his Works throughout the World to be ſo wonderful and unaccountable, that it is fit for us to acknowledge our Ignorance, but never accuſe his Providence; if we cannot ſee the Cauſe why he ſends any Affliction, or continues it long upon us; inſtead of murmuring and complaining, in ſuch a caſe, this Book effectually teaches us to reſign our ſelves abſolutely to him; ſilently to adore and reverence the unſearchable Depth of his wiſe Councils; contentedly to bear what he inflicts upon us; ſtill to aſſert his Righteouſneſs, in the midſt of the Calamities which befal the Good, and in the moſt proſperous Succeſſes of the Wicked; and ſtedfaſtly to believe that all at laſt ſhall turn to our Advantage, if, like his Servant *Job*, we perſevere in Faith, and Hope, and Patience.

To which this Book gives ſo high an Encouragement, and contains ſuch powerful Comforts for the Afflicted; that the old Tradition is, *Moſes* could not find any Thing like it for the Support and Satisfaction of the *Iſraelites* in their Egyptian Bondage; and therefore took the Pains to tranſlate it into their Language, out of the *Syriack*, wherein it was firſt written. Thus he who writes the Commentaries upon this Book under the Name of *Origen*, tells us, "That he "found *in Antiquorum dictis*, in the Sayings of the Ancients; that when the "Great *Moſes* was ſent by God into *Egypt*, and beheld the Affliction of the "Children of *Iſrael* to be ſo grievous, that nothing he could ſay was able to "comfort them in that lamentable Condition: He declared to them the ter"rible Sufferings of *Job*, with his happy Deliverance; and ſetting them "down in Writing alſo, gave this Book to that diſtreſſed People. That "reading theſe Things in their ſeveral Tribes and Families, and hearing "how ſorely this bleſſed Man ſuffered, they might comfort and exhort one "another, to endure with Patience and Thankſgiving the Evils which en"compaſſed them; and hearing withal how bountifully God rewarded *Job* "for his Patience, they might hope for Deliverance; and expect the Benefit "of a bleſſed Reward of their Labours.

"Be ye conſtant, O Children of *Iſrael*, (ſaid *Moſes* with a pleaſing Counte"nance, when he delivered this Book into their Hands) do not faint in your "Minds, O ye Poſterity of *Abraham*, but ſuffer Grief, and bear theſe Evils "patiently, as that Man in the Land of *Uz* did, whoſe Name was *Job*: who, "though he was a righteous and faithful Perſon, in whom was no Fault, yet "ſuffered the ſoreſt Torments by the Malice of the Devil; as you do now moſt "unjuſtly from *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians. They treat you indeed very baſe"ly, and have enſlaved you, without any Fault of yours, *&c.* But do not "deſpair of a better Condition; you ſhall be delivered, as *Job* was, and have "a Reward of your Tribulations, like that which God gave to him.——

There follows a great deal more to the ſame Purpoſe in that Writer, which I ſhall not tranſcribe. But only add, That the Church of Chriſt, as he obſerves, was wont, after this Example, to read this Paſſion of *Job* publickly in all their Aſſemblies; upon *Holy Days* (when they commemorated the Martyrs) and upon *Faſting Days*, and *Days of Abſtinence*; and upon the Days of our *Saviour's Paſſion*; of which they thought they ſaw a Figure in the Sufferings of *Job*; as of our Saviour's Reſurrection and Exaltation, in *Job*'s wonderful Recovery,

and

and Advancement to a greater Height of Prosperity. And as they read this History in the Church publickly; so when they went to visit any one privately that was in Grief, Mourning, or Sorrow, they read a Lesson of the Patience of *Job* for their Comfort and Support under their Troubles; and to take away the Distress and Anguish of their Heart.

I pray God it may have that Effect upon all afflicted Persons, who shall read it; and that others also, considering the Instability of all worldly Things (which is here also lively represented) may use their Prosperity with such Moderation, that they may bear a Change of their Condition, if it come, with an equal Mind. I am sure there is no Man, of whatsoever Rank, or in whatsoever Condition he be, but may learn very much, if he please, from this admirable Pattern. Which is the very first that is left us upon Record, of a Vertuous Life, both in Prosperity and in Adversity, and that not only as a private Man, but as a Prince; *In whom it is the greater Commendation to obey the Will of God; because he hath more Means and Temptations to fulfil his own.*

That therefore shall conclude the Character of *Job*; who when he had no Superiour to control him, (as you may read, *Chap.* XXIX, and XXXI.) gave such an Example of Piety and Devotion, Humility and Moderation, Chastity and Purity, Justice and Equity, Charity and Compassion; as few have done in a private Condition. This is as admirable, and will be praised as much to all Generations, as his generous Patience. Which was so much famed in ancient Times, that (from a Passage, which some Editions of the LXX. have added to the Conclusion of this Book) it went as a common Tradition ὡς ἀνὴρ ἐκ, (as *Theophanes* speaks) having nothing incredible in it; that *Job* was one of those, who had the Honour to rise out of his Grave at our Saviour's Resurrection; when, as St. *Matthew* assures us, XXVII. 51. *Many Bodies of Saints which slept, arose, and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many.*

James V. 7, 11.

Behold we count them happy which endure. Be patient therefore, Brethren, unto the Coming of the Lord.



A PARAPHRASE ON THE BOOK of JOB.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter is a plain Narration of the flourishing Condition wherein Job lived, before the Envy and Malice of the Devil brought upon him the sorest Calamities; which are particularly described, with the Occasion of them, and his admirable Constancy under them; whereby he became as eminent an Example of Patience in Adversity, as he had been of Piety and all manner of Virtue in his Prosperity.

Ver. 1. THERE was a Man in the Land of Uz, whose Name was Job; and this Man was Perfect and Upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed Evil.] In the Time of the ancient Patriarchs, before the giving of the Law of *Moses*, there lived in *Arabia* a Person of great Eminence, whose Name was *Job*: A Man not more Illustrious for his Birth or Place, than for the Height of his Virtue, which appear'd in a most unblameable Life, void of all Hypocrisy, both in his Piety toward God, and in his Dealings with Men, and all other Ways.

Ver. 2. And there were born unto him seven Sons and three Daughters.] Whom God therefore had so wonderfully blessed, that his outward Prosperity was equal to the Greatness of his Mind. For first, he had given him the sweet Fruits of Marriage, in a numerous Tribe of seven Sons and three Daughters.

Ver. 3. His Substance also was seven thousand Sheep, and three thousand Camels, and five hundred Yoke of Oxen, and five hundred She-asses, and a very great Household; so that he was greatest of all the Men of the East.] He was enriched also abundantly with the Goods of that Country; which consisted in seven thousand Sheep, three thousand Camels, five hundred yoke of Oxen, as many She-asses; with such

ſuch a very great Tillage, and ſo many Servants, that in thoſe Eaſtern parts he had neither Superiour nor Equal.

Ver. 4. *And his Sons went and feaſted in* their *houſes every one his Day, and ſent and called for their three Siſters, to eat and to drink with them.*] And together with all this Happineſs, he had the Pleaſure to ſee his Children live in Love and Unity. For it was the Cuſtom of his Sons to meet at each others Houſes, and to make a feaſt every one upon his birth-day: (Ill. 1.) And he whoſe turn it was to treat the reſt, alway invited their three Siſters to come and be merry with them.

Ver. 5. *And it was ſo, when the Days of* their *feaſting were gone about, that Job ſent and ſanctified them, and roſe up early in the Morning, and offered burnt-offerings,* according *to the Number of them all: for Job ſaid, It may be that my Sons have ſinned, and curſed* GOD *in their Hearts. Thus did Job continually.*] This Feaſt was wont to laſt ſeven Days; at the End of which their good Father never failed to ſend a Meſſenger to them, to call upon them, to prepare themſelves by Faſting and Prayer for the Sacrifice he meant to offer for them: And when they were aſſembled, he roſe up early in the Morning, (the fitteſt Time for Devotion) and prayed to GOD, by offering Burnt-offerings for every one of them, becauſe he was afraid they might have done or ſpoken ſomething that was prophane, and misbecoming their Religion, when their Minds, looſened by Mirth, were leſs upon their Guard. And thus he did conſtantly after every Feaſt.

Ver. 6. ¶ *Now there was a Day, when the Sons of* GOD *came to preſent themſelves before the* LORD, *and Satan came alſo among them.*] But this great Piety was not ſufficient to preſerve him from falſe Accuſations. For as *Job* ſet a Time for his Children to examine themſelves, ſo there are certain Seaſons when the Angels come and ſtand in the Divine Preſence, to give an account of their Miniſtry, and to receive Commands from GOD, the Judge and Governour of the World: and Satan, that ſubtile Adverſary of Mankind, came one Day, and thruſt in himſelf among them.

Ver. 7. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, Whence comeſt thou? Then Satan anſwered the* LORD, *and ſaid, From going to and fro in the Earth, and from walking up and down in it.*] And the LORD, (to make him ſenſible he was not an abſolute Prince, but his Subject) called to him, and demanded an Account of him, where he had been, and from whence he came? To which he gave an Anſwer, which expreſſed, as the great Reſtleſneſs of his Mind, and his unwearied Diligence, ſo the Limitation of his Power, which extends only to this lower World; for he told him, he came from going too and fro in the Earth, and from walking up and down in it.

Ver. 8. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, Haſt thou conſidered my Servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright Man, one that feareth* GOD, *and eſcheweth evil.* Then the LORD ſaid to him again; after all thy Inquiſitiveneſs and buſie ſearch, thou haſt nothing to object againſt the Integrity of my Servant *Job*; a Man that excels in Piety and Juſtice, and all other Vertues, which he practiſes exactly and ſincerely.

Ver. 9. *Then Satan anſwered the* LORD, *and ſaid, Doth Job fear* GOD *for nought?*] Yes, ſaid Satan; he ſerves himſelf rather than thee; it is not thy Pleaſure which he regards, but his own Profit.

Ver. 10. *Haſt thou not made an Hedge about him, and about his Houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? Thou haſt bleſſed the Work of his Hands, and his Subſtance is increaſed in the Land.*] Haſt not thou payed him well for his Pains? and ſo inviron'd him and his Family, and all belonging to him in every Place, that no Harm can come to them? Whereby all his Buſineſs proſpers, and his Flocks and his Herds are ſo increaſed, that the Country can ſcarce hold them.

Ver. 11. *But put forth thine Hand now and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy Face.*] But I am confident, if thou wilt but employ that Power to plague him, which hath ſo long preſerved him, he will not only in his Heart, but openly deny thy Providence.

Ver. 12. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath* is *in thy Power, only upon himſelf put not forth thine Hand. So Satan went forth from the Preſence of the* LORD.] Then the LORD (who was willing to prove the Vertue of his Servant in an afflicted Eſtate, as he had done in a proſperous) withdrew the Protection he had given him, and granted Satan a Commiſſion to diſpoſe of all belonging to *Job* according as he pleaſed; excepting only his Perſon, which he commanded him not to touch. This was joyful News to that malicious Spirit, who went immediately to do what he had long deſired.

Ver. 13. ¶ *And there was a Day when his Sons and his Daughters were eating and drinking Wine in their eldeſt Brother's Houſe:*] And within a ſhort Time found an Opportunity to try the Conſtancy of *Job*, by doing him all the Miſchief poſſible, in one and the ſame Day: which was the Birth-day of his eldeſt Son, when all his Children (far from fearing any Evil) were met, according to their Cuſtom, at his Houſe, to feaſt and rejoice together.

Ver. 14. *And there came a Meſſenger unto Job, and ſaid, The Oxen were plowing, and the Aſſes feeding beſide them,*] Then it was that Satan put in Execution what he had deſigned; and firſt of all ſtirred up a thieviſh ſort of People in *Arabia*, to fall upon that Part of his Land which was next to them. Of which Tidings was preſently brought to *Job* by a Meſſenger, ſaying,

Ver. 15. *And the Sabeans fell* upon them, *and took them away; yea, they have ſlain the Servants with the edge of the Sword, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee.* As the Oxen were at Plough, and the Aſſes in a Paſture hard by them, the *Sabeans* made an inrode into thy Country, and carried them all away; having ſlain, by an unexpected Aſſault, all thoſe who ſhould have preſerved them, except my ſelf alone, who made an eſcape to acquaint thee with it.

Ver. 16. *While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, The Fire of* GOD *is fallen from Heaven, and hath burnt up the Sheep, and the Servants, and conſumed them; and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee.* He had not quite delivered his Meſſage before another

ther of his Servants arrived, (as evils seldom come single) to tell him that there had been a very great Lightning in those Parts, where his Sheep were feeding, which had consumed both them and the Shepherds, and left none surviving, but himself alone, to give him Notice of this disaster.

Ver. 17. *While he was yet speaking there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three Bands, and fell upon the Camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the Servants with the Edge of the Sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*] He had not finished his Narration before another Messenger was at the Door, saying, Our Neighbours the *Chaldeans*, seeking for Booty, divided themselves into three Parties, who set upon us all at once; and they have carried away the Camels, and killed all the Servants that looked after them, except my self, who made a shift to save my self by flight, to bring thee News of this Invasion.

Ver. 18. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy Sons and thy Daughters were eating and drinking Wine in their eldest Brother's House:*] Before he had concluded, came in another, the most doleful Messenger of all, saying, thy Children, as thou knowest, were feasting with their elder Brother:

Ver. 19. *And behold there came a great Wind from the Wilderness, and smote the four Corners of the House, and it fell upon the Young Men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*] And behold, on a sudden there arose a violent Wind, which coming from the Desart, and whirling about the House, took away the four Corners of it, and buried them all in his Ruins; and there is not one of the Guests escaped, that I know of, but only my self, to be the Messenger of this great Calamity.

Ver. 20. *Then Job arose and rent his Mantle, and shaved his Head, and fell down upon the Ground, and worshipped.*] Then *Job* (who had heard all the rest without Disturbance) was overcome with Grief at this last Word, and laying aside all other Thoughts, gave up himself to the most lamentable Sorrow: for he rent his upper Garment, cut off the Hair of his Head, and threw himself upon the Ground. Where he deceived the Devil's expectation; for he most reverently adored, as became his Piety, the Divine Majesty, and submitted himself to his Will, saying,

Ver. 21. *And said, Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked shall I return thither: the* LORD *gave, and the* LORD *hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the* LORD.] I am but what I was at first, and what I must have been again at last; And he that hath stript me of all before I die, hath taken away nothing but what he gave. Let him therefore be praised, who is the Donor of all good Things, and the Disposer of all Events.

Ver. 22. *In all this Job sinned not, nor charged* GOD *foolishly.*] This was the worst Word that he spake, when all these evils came upon him so unexpectedly, and so thick together: All the rest was like this; and nothing dropt from his Mouth which in the least accused or questioned the Providence of God.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The first Part of this Chapter is a Continuation of the Narration, which was begun in the foregoing, of the Calamities which befel this good Man; whom GOD *suffered the Devil to afflict in his Body, as he had already done in his Goods and Children. And then follows a farther Testimony of his Constancy, notwithstanding his Wife's angry and prophane Accusation of the Divine Providence. Though, it is true, he was so much dejected to see himself reduced to this extremity of Misery, that neither he nor his Friends that came to visit him, were able for several Days to speak a Word.*

1. *AGAIN there was a Day when the Sons of* GOD *came to present themselves before the* LORD, *and Satan came also among them to present himself before the* LORD.] After these Things the Angels going again to attend the Pleasure of the divine Majesty, and to give an Account of their several Charges; Satan also openly appeared among them, and presented himself, as ready and desirous to be examined about his Management.

Ver. 2. *And the* LORD *said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the* LORD, *and said, from going to and fro in the Earth, and from walking up and down in it.*] But not daring to speak before he was called, he waited till the divine Majesty asked where he had been, and what he had done. To which he answered, as he had done before, that he had not lost his Time, but had fetched a circuit round about the Earth, to find Opportunity for the Exercise of his Power.

Ver. 3. *And the* LORD *said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my Servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright Man, one that feareth God, and eschweth Evil? and still he holdeth fast his Integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without Cause.*] Well then, said the LORD, art not thou convinced how true a Character I gave of my Servant *Job*, and how much thou hast calumniated him? for he still resolutely continues as perfectly vertuous as he was in his Prosperity, though I have consented to these miserable Calamities which he suffers undeservedly.

Ver. 4. *And Satan answered the* LORD, *and said, Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath will he give for his Life.*] To which Satan answered again and said, that his Constancy was not so wonderful, since a Man hath Reason to think himself Rich, who is in Health. Who is there that will not give another's Skin to save his own; nay, part with his Children, as well as his Goods, to save his Life?

Ver. 5. *But put forth thine Hand now, and touch his Bone, and his Flesh, and he will curse thee to thy Face.*] But enlarge now my Commission a little further, and let me afflict his Body, so that it touch him to the very quick, and he will openly renounce thee, and deny thy Providence.

Ver.

Ver. 6. *And the* LORD *said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine Hand, but save his Life.*] To which the Divine Majesty (knowing the Fidelity of *Job*, which hereby would become more illustrious) was pleased to yield; and said, Behold, I give thee the same Power over his Person, which thou hadst over his Family and Goods: inflict what Diseases thou wilt upon him, so they do not kill him.

Ver. 7. ¶ *So went Satan forth from the Presence of the* LORD, *and smote Job with sore Boils, from the Sole of his Foot unto his Crown.*] No sooner had Satan obtained this new Grant, but, withdrawing himself from the Presence of the Divine Majesty, he went to pursue his mischievous Desires; and smote *Job* from top to toe with a fiery Ulcer, whose sharp Humour was extream grievous and painful, and prick'd him (according to his Wish) to the very Bone.

Ver. 8. *And he took him a Potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the Ashes.*] The filthiness of the Disease also encreased that Sorrow and Heaviness which before had seized on him, and made him sit down in the Ashes: where he laid hold on what came next to Hand, a Piece of a broken Pot, to wipe away the foul Matter which issued out of his Boils.

Ver. 9. ¶ *Then said his Wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine Integrity? Curse* GOD *and die.*] And it was a farther Addition to his Grief, to hear his dear Consort (whom the divine Goodness he thought had still left to help him to bear his Affliction) utter this prophane Speech, what a Folly is it still to persist in the Service of GOD, when all thou gettest by it is to give him Thanks and perish.

Ver. 10. *But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish Women speaketh: what? shall we receive Good at the Hand of* GOD, *and shall we not receive Evil? In all this did not Job sin with his Lips.*] These Words struck him to the very Heart: but instead of being angry with GOD, he only severely reproved her, telling her, that she talked like one of the wicked Women: and then piously represented to her, that we ought to take nothing ill which comes from the Hand of GOD, (as all evil Things do as well as good) and the more good we have received from Him, the less Reason we have to complain when we suffer any Evil. No Discourse but such as this was heard to come from his Mouth.

Ver. 11. ¶ *Now when Job's three Friends heard of all this Evil that was come upon him, they came every Man from his own Place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an Appointment together to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.*] Now there dwelt in the neighbouring Provinces three great Men, with whom *Job* had long maintained a particular Friendship; who, hearing the sad Tidings of his Sufferings, came every one from his Country to visit him. Their Names were *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, *Bildad* the *Shuhite*, and *Zophar* the *Naamathite*; who all three met at his House on the same Day, according to an Appointment they had made, to come and condole with him, and comfort him.

Ver. 12. *And when they lift up their Eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their Voice and wept; and they rent every one his Mantle, and sprinkled Dust upon their Heads towards Heaven.*] But as soon as ever they entred into the Place where he lay, they were surprized with so miserable a Spectacle of Deformity, that they shrieked aloud, as Men affrighted, and burst out into Tears, and rent their Garments, and threw Dust into the Air; which falling on their Heads, expressed the Confusion they were in, to find him so covered over with Ulcers, that they could not know him.

Ver. 13. *So they sate down with him upon the Ground seven Days and seven Nights: and none spake a Word unto him, for they saw that* his *Grief was very great.*] And when they approached nearer him, they only sate down upon the Earth, in the same mournful Posture wherein they found him, but were not able (so much were they astonished) for seven Days and Nights to say one Word of the Business about which they were come to him. And indeed his Grief was so exceeding great, that they did not well know what to say, till Time, which alters all Things, had asswag'd a little both his Grief and theirs.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Here begin the Discourses which Job *and his Friends had about his Affliction; which are all represented by the Author of this Book, poetically; not as hitherto, in a plain Simple Narration, but in most elegant Verse. And being overcharged with Grief, (without the least Word of Comfort from his Friends) he that had for some time born the Weight of his Afflictions with an admirable Constancy, could not contain himself any longer, but bursts out (to such a Degree was the Anguish of his Spirit encreased) into the most passionate Complaints, of the Miseries of humane Life. The Consideration of which made him prefer Death much before it, and wish that either he had never come into the World, or gone presently out of it again, or at least might now forthwith be dismissed.*

1. *After this opened Job his Mouth, and cursed his Day.*] And at the End of seven Days, *Job* himself began by Complaints to give some vent to his Grief, which had stopified him thus long: But he burst out into such bitter Lamentations, that he wish'd a thousand Times he had never been born.

Ver. 2. *And Job spake, and said,*] What which he said was to this Effect:

Ver. 3. *Let the Day perish wherein I was born, and the Night* in which *it was said, There is a Man-child conceived.*] Let the Day and the Night of my Birth be never more mentioned, but be quite forgotten, as if it had never been.

Ver. 4. *Let that Day be Darkness; let not* GOD *regard it from above, neither let the Light shine upon it.*] Let that Day be turned into Night, and not be counted among the Days: let the Sun then withdraw its Light, and never shine upon it.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *Let Darkneſs and the Shadow of Death ſtain it, let a Cloud dwell upon it, let the Blackneſs of the Day terrify it.*] Let the moſt diſmal Darkneſs and the thickeſt Clouds wholly poſſeſs it, and render it terrible to Men.

Ver. 6. As for *that Night, let Darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joined unto the Days of the Year, let it not come into the Number of the Months.*] And let the Night be of the ſame ſort, and both of them quite blotted out of the Calendar.

Ver. 7. *Lo, let that Night be ſolitary, let no joyful Voice come therein.*] Let no Body meet together on that Night, to Feaſt or make merry.

Ver. 8. *Let them curſe it that curſe the Day who are ready to raiſe up their Mourning.*] Let it be as the Day wherein Men bewail the greateſt Misfortune, or the Time wherein they ſee the moſt dreadful Apparition.

Ver. 9. *Let the Stars of the Twilight thereof be Dark, let it look for Light, but* have *none, neither let it ſee the Dawning of the Day:*] Let there not ſo much as a Star appear in that Night, nor ſo much Light as we ſee at Peep of Day.

Ver. 10. *Becauſe it ſhut not up the Doors of my* Mother's *Womb, nor hid Sorrow from mine Eyes.*] Becauſe it did not bury me in my Mother's Womb, and thereby ſecure me from all theſe Miſeries.

Ver. 11. *Why died I not from the Womb?* why *did I* not *give up the Ghoſt when I came out of the Belly?*] What a Misfortune was it, that I did not die before I was born, or at leaſt as ſoon as I came into the World?

Ver. 12. *Why did the Knees prevent me? or why the Breaſts that I ſhould ſuck?*] That they who received me from the Womb did not let me fall on the Ground? or my Nurſe refuſe to give me ſuck?

Ver. 13. *For now ſhould I have lien ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then had I been at Reſt:*] Then ſhould I have felt none of theſe Miſeries which I now endure, but lain quiet and undiſturbed;

Ver. 14. *With Kings and Counſellors of the Earth, which built deſolate Places for themſelves;*] Equal to Kings and the greateſt Perſons, who lie alone in the Tombs which they built themſelves:

Ver. 15. *Or with Princes that had Gold, who filled their Houſes with Silver:*] Having Gold and Silver in abundance, whereof now they are bereaved:

Ver. 16. *Or as a hidden untimely Birth I had not been; as Infants* which *never ſaw Light.*] Or like an Abortive, which was never numbred among Men.

Ver. 17. *There the wicked ceaſe* from *troubling; and there the weary be at Reſt.*] There are none can hurt us in the Grave, though they be never ſo malicious, nor ſhall we toil any more when we come thither.

Ver. 18. There *the Priſoners reſt together, they hear not the Voice of the Oppreſſor.*] The Captives, and they who are condemned to hard ſervitude, take no Pains there, and do not dread the Voice of the Exactor of their Labours.

Ver. 19. *The ſmall and great are there, and the Servant is free from his Maſter.*] There none are greater than other; but the Servant in that Place is as free as his Maſter.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore is Light given to him that is in Miſery, and Life unto the bitter* in *Soul?*] Is it not ſtrange, that a Man ſhould be forced to live, when he hath no Mind to it?

Ver. 21. *Which long for Death, but it* cometh *not, and dig for it more than for hid Treaſures?*] But wiſhes for Death, tho' in vain, and ſeeks it more eagerly than the greateſt Riches?

Ver. 22. *Which rejoice exceedingly,* and *are glad when they can find the Grave?*] Leaping for Joy when he can meet with his Grave, as far more welcome to him than a Mine of Silver?

Ver. 23. Why is Light given *to a Man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?*] Not knowing which Way no turn himſelf, but onely thither?

Ver. 24. *For my ſighing cometh before I eat, and my Roarings are poured out like the Waters.*] This is my Condition, whoſe Meat merely ſuſtains a miſerable Life, which is all Sighs and Sobs, as loud as the Roarings of the Lion.

Ver. 25. *For the Thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.*] For the very Thing which I dreaded is faln upon me, notwithſtanding all my Care to prevent it.

Ver. 26. *I was not in Safety, neither had I Reſt, neither was I quiet, yet Trouble came.*] I did not confide in my Riches, nor in the leaſt lull my ſelf in ſecurity (Chap. I. 5.) and yet that did not preſerve me from being miſerable.

CHAP IV.

ARGUMENT.

Eliphaz *incenſed at this Complaint of* Job, *inſtead of condoling with him, and pitying the Miſeries which had put him into this Agony, and applying ſitting Lenitives to his Anguiſh, bluntly rebukes him for not following the good Advice that he uſed to give to others in their Adverſity; and tells him, he had Reaſon to ſuſpect his Piety, becauſe the innocent were not wont to ſuffer ſuch Things, but only wicked Oppreſſors, whom, though never ſo mighty,* God *had always humbled. Witneſs the* Horims, *who dwelt in* Seir, (*II.* Deut. 12.) *whom the Anceſtors of* Eliphaz (*XXXVI.* Gen. 11.) *had overcome, though they were as fierce as Lions. To thoſe Beaſts of Prey, of all ſorts, he compares the Tyrants whom he ſpeaks of in this Chapter,* v. 10, 11. *intending, it is likely, to remember him alſo of the Deſtruction of the* Emims *by the Children of* Moab, (*II.* Deut. 10, 11.) *and of the* Zamzummims, (v. 20, 21.) *who were rooted out by the Children of* Ammon, *as the* Horims *by the Children of* Eſau: *from whoſe Grandchild* Eliphaz *ſeems to have been deſcended, and called by the Name of the eldeſt Son of* Eſau. *He tells* Job *alſo of a Viſion he had to confirm the ſame Truth, That Man's Wickedneſs is the Cauſe of his Deſtruction.*

1. *Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,*] Then *Eliphaz* (one of his most ancient Friends, descended from *Teman*) replied to him and said;

Ver. 2. *If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can with-hold himself from speaking?*] We must either still keep Silence, or speak what will not please thee. But Truth sure is more to be regarded than Friendship; and therefore I must remember thee.

Ver. 3. *Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak Hands.*] That thou, it is well known, hast given good Counsel unto others, (and perhaps reproved their Impatience,) thou hast incouraged those who were dispirited;

Ver. 4. *Thy Words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble Knees.*] And by thy Discourse hast supported those whose Hearts were ready to sink, and settled those who trembled under their Burthen.

Ver. 5. *But now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.*] And now that thou art fal'n into the same Condition, thou canst not practise thy own Lessons; but fainteſt, and art struck with Consternation.

Ver. 6. *Is not this thy Fear, thy Confidence, thy Hope, and the Uprightneſs of thy Ways?*] Is not this the Time to exercise thy Piety, (so much fam'd) thy Confidence in GOD, thy Hope, thine Integrity?

Ver. 7. *Remember, I pray thee, who* ever *perished being Innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?*] Consult thine own Observation, and tell me when thou ever sawest a righteous Man forsaken by GOD.

Ver. 8. *Even as I have seen, they that plow Iniquity, and sow Wickedneſs, reap the same.*] Quite contrary, I have seen the Wicked reaping the Fruit of their Doings.

Ver. 9. *By the Blast of* GOD *they perish, and by the Breath of his Noſtrils are they consumed.*] GOD blasts and consumes them as the nipping Wind, or the Fire doth the Corn in the Field.

Ver. 10. *The roaring of the Lion, and the Voice of the fierce Lion, and the Teeth of the young Lions are broken.*] Though they be as fierce as the Lions and as strong, their Power is broken.

Ver. 11. *The old Lion perisheth for lack of Prey, and the stout Lions Whelps are scattered abroad.*] The greatest Tyrants and their Posterity, after they have long enjoy'd their Power, are deprived of all their Riches gotten by Oppression, and come to Nothing.

Ver. 12. *Now a Thing was secretly brought to me, and mine Ear received a little thereof.*] If these Observations be not sufficient to convince thee, hear what GOD himself secretly whispered to me.

Ver. 13. *In Thoughts from the Visions of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth on Men,*] As I was ruminating one Night, when all were asleep, of some Visions which I had had,

Ver. 14. *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my Bones to shake.*] I was on a sudden seized with such a Fear, that it made every Joint of my Body tremble.

Ver. 15. *Then a Spirit passed before my Face, the Hair of my Fleſh stood up.*] Whereupon I saw a Spirit pass by me, which made mine Hair stand on End.

Ver. 16. *It stood still, but I could not discern the Form thereof: an Image* was *before mine Eyes, there was Silence, and I heard a Voice,* saying,] I am not able to describe what it was like; for though it stood still, and I saw an Image of something, yet I can only tell what I heard in a still Voice, saying,

Ver. 17. *Shall mortal Man be more just than* GOD? *shall a Man be more pure than his Maker?*] Can any one think that a miserable Man is more righteous than GOD his Judge? or that it is possible for any Body to be more unreprovable than he that made him?

Ver. 18. *Behold, he put no Truſt in his Servants; and his Angels he charged with Folly:*] The Heavenly Ministers themselves may fail; for they are not perfectly Wise, though they have no Flesh and Blood as we have.

Ver. 19. *How much leſs* on *them that dwell in Houses of Clay, whose Foundation is in the Duſt, which are crushed before the Moth?*] How can we then pretend to Perfection, who dwell in Bodies of Dirt; which stand upon no firm Foundation, but are as subject to be destroyed as a Garment to be fretted with Moths?

Ver. 20. *They are destroyed from Morning to Evening: they perish for Ever without any regarding it.*] We see continual Examples of those that are cut off: they are quite taken away, when no Body thinks of it.

Ver. 21. *Doth not their Excellency* which is *in them go away? they die even without Wiſdom.*] Though their Dignities be never so great, and their Posterity never so Numerous, all go away with them, and they die like so many Beasts, who have no Understanding of their latter End.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

Eliphaz *still prosecutes the very same Argument; endeavouring to confirm it from the Opinion and Observation of other Men, as well as from his own. And thereupon exhorts him to Repentance, as the surest Way to find Mercy with* GOD; *and to be not only restored to his former Prosperity, but to be preserved hereafter from the Incursions of savage People, or of wild Beasts, and from all the rest of the Disasters which had befal'n him. Of this he bids him, in the Conclusion, be assured; for it was a Point he had studied.*

1. *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?*] If thou dost not believe me, thou mayst enquire of others. There is no good Man but is of this Opinion: and if an Angel should appear to thee, (as there did to me) thou wouldst have no other Information but this;

Ver. 2. *For Wrath killeth the foolish Man, and Envy slayeth the silly one.*] That GOD in his Anger and Indignation destroys the Wicked, and him that errs from his Precepts.

Ver.

Ver. 3. *I have seen the foolish taking Root: but suddenly I cursed his Habitation.*] This is so certain, that I have predicted his Downfall, when he seemed most firmly settled in his Prosperity.

Ver. 4. *His Children are far from Safety, and they are crushed in the Gate, neither* is there *any to deliver* them.] His Children also fell with him; Justice took hold of them, and would not let them escape.

Ver. 5. *Whose Harvest the Hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the Thorns; and the Robber swalloweth up their Substance.*] The hungry Soldier devoured their Harvest, there was no Fence could secure it, but the rest of their Riches became a Prey to the Robber.

Ver. 6. *Although Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground:*] For we are not to ascribe the Trouble and Misery of Mankind meerly to earthly Causes, which are but the Instruments of GOD's Justice.

Ver. 7. *Yet Man is born unto Trouble, as the Sparks fly upward.*] Who hath made it as natural to Man to suffer, (having offended him) as it is for the Sparks to fly upward.

Ver. 8. *I would seek unto* GOD, *and unto* GOD *would I commit my Cause:*] Wherefore, if I were in thy Case, I would humbly address my self to GOD, and desire him to order all Things as he pleases.

Ver. 9. *Which doth great Things, and unsearchable, marvellous Things without Number.*] For he is the Author of all those wonderful Things, whose Causes we can no more find out, than we can count their Number.

Ver. 10. *Who giveth Rain upon the Earth, and sendeth Waters upon the Fields:*] Of the Rain, for instance, in its Season; and of the Springs which run in the Fields;

Ver. 11. *To set up on High those that be Low; that those which mourn may be exalted to Safety.*] Whereby Men of low Condition are inriched and grow great; as the Plants and Corn shoot out of the Earth, after they are moistned with Showers.

Ver. 12. *He disappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, so that their Hands cannot perform* their *Enterprise.*] And, on the contrary, he defeats the craftiest Designs of subtle Men to raise themselves; and it is not in their Power to effect that which they have most wisely contrived.

Ver. 13. *He taketh the wise in their own Craftiness: and the Counsel of the froward is carried headlong.*] Nay, they produce that which they studied to avoid; and when they think themselves sure, make too much haste to their Ruine.

Ver. 14. *They meet with Darkness in the Daytime, and grope in the Noon-day as in the Night.*] They trip in the plainest Way; and see not their Danger, when it is visible to every Body but themselves.

Ver. 15. *But he saveth the Poor from the Sword, from their Mouth, and from the Hand of the Mighty.*] Whereby many a helpless Man is delivered, both from the open Force, and from the treacherous Flatteries or Calumnies of those that are too strong for them.

Ver. 16. *So the Poor hath Hope, and Iniquity stoppeth her Mouth.*] And therefore he that is oppressed should not despair, nor should the Oppressors boast themselves; for there is Hope that GOD will save the one to the utter Destruction of the other.

Ver. 17. *Behold, happy is the Man whom* GOD *correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:*] Behold then, how little Reason there is to complain of GOD's chastisements, which if thou dost not refuse, he is is able to turn to thy Good:

Ver. 18. *For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his Hands make whole.*] For he doth not meerly wound, but, like a wise Chirurgeon, by that very means he cures and heals.

Ver. 19. *He shall deliver thee in six Troubles; yea, in seven there shall no Evil touch thee.*] Thy Troubles cannot be so many, but if thou submissively accept them, he will free thee from them.

Ver. 20. *In Famine he shall redeem thee from Death; and in War from the Power of the Sword.*] He will feed thee in the most barren Years, and defend thee in the Day of Battel.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt be hid from the Scourge of the Tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of Destruction when it cometh.*] False Accusers shall not be able to hurt thee; and when whole Countries are depopulated, thou shalt be secure.

Ver. 22. *At Destruction and Famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the Beasts of the Earth:*] When nothing is to be seen but wild Beasts, whom Famine forces from their Dens, thou shalt be chearful and undaunted:

Ver. 23. *For thou* shalt be *in League with the Stones of the Field: and the Beasts of the Field shall be at Peace with thee.*] For the stony Parts of the Country shall not fail to bring forth its Fruits plentifully; and the Beasts of the Field shall not devour them.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt know that thy Tabernacle* shall be *in Peace; and thou shalt visit thy Habitation, and shalt not sin.*] Whersoever thou pitchest thy Tent, thou shalt find it in Safety: and when thou takest an Account of thine Estate, all Things shall answer thine Expectation.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt know also that thy Seed* shall be *great, and thine Offspring as the Grass of the Earth.*] Thou shalt find thy Posterity also very great and numerous like the Grass; though now thou art as bare as the Earth in Winter.

Ver. 26. *Thou shalt come to* thy *Grave in a full Age, like as a Shock of Corn cometh in in his Season.*] Thou shalt not die a violent or untimely Death; but be carried to thy Grave as Corn is to the Barn, when it is full ripe and fit to be gathered.

Ver. 27. *Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou* it *for thy Good.*] Doubt not of this, for we have thoroughly considered it, and find it so: receive it therefore, and keep it in Memory.

CHAP.

CHAP VI.

ARGUMENT.

Job, *not at all convinced by these Discourses, justifies the Complaint he had made, (Chap. III.) which* Eliphaz *had now accused; maintaining that his Grief was not equal to the Cause of it. And therefore he renews his Wishes of Death: at which though they might wonder who felt nothing to make them weary of Life; yet he had Reason, he shews, for what he did; and one more than before, which was their Unkindness: who pretended to be Friends; but by this rude Reproof of him at the very first, without so much as one compassionate Word, or the least Syllable of Consolation, shewed how little Sympathy they had with him in his Sufferings. These Things he desires them to consider, and weigh the Cause of his Complaint a little better, before they passed any farther Judgment on it.*

Ver. 1. BUT *Job answered and said,*] Here *Job* replied to *Eliphaz*, and spake in these Terms to him,

Ver. 2. *Oh that my Grief were throughly weighed, and my Calamity laid in the Balances together!*] Would to GOD some more equal Person than you would lay my Complaint and my Sufferings one against the other, and judge sincerely which is the heaviest;

Ver. 3. *For now it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea: therefore my Words are swallowed up.*] He would soon find, that the Sand of the Sea is not so heavy as my Misery; and that I am not able to complain enough.

Ver. 4. *For the Arrows of the Almighty* are *within me, the Poison whereof drinketh up my Spirit: the Terrours of* GOD *do set themselves in Array against me.*] The Almighty himself hath given me such a Wound, that I am dispirited: for nothing but dreadful Spectacles present themselves ready arm'd against me.

Ver. 5. *Doth the wild Ass bray when he hath Grass? or loweth the Ox over his Fodder?*] It is easie for you, who feel no Pain nor Want, to forbear Complaints; which is no more than the very Ass and other brute Creatures do.

Ver. 6. *Can that which is unsavory be eaten without Salt? or is there* any *Taste in the White of an Egg?*] But may not he who eats insipid Things, call for a little Salt to make them go down better? (How much more then may we call for something to qualify that which is very bitter?)

Ver. 7. *The Things that my Soul refused to touch,* are *as my sorrowful Meat.*] As I do now, who have nothing afforded me for my Support, but such Discourses as yours, which my very Soul loaths.

Ver. 8. *Oh that I might have my Request! and that* GOD *would grant* me *the Thing that I long for!*] I cannot but cry unto GOD, and beseech him to grant me my Hearts Desire.

Ver. 9. *Even that it would please* GOD *to destroy me; that he would let loose his Hand, and cut me off.*] Which is, that he would be pleased not to let me languish in this miserable Condition, but with one Stroke more quite cut me off.

Ver. 10. *Then should I yet have Comfort, yea, I would harden my self in Sorrow: let him not spare, for I have not concealed the Words of the holy One.*] It would be a great Comfort to me, to hope for this, and would strengthen me to endure the severest Pains: for I would receive the Sentence of Death with Acclamations of Praise, if GOD would pronounce it against me.

Ver. 11. *What is my Strength that I should hope? and what is mine End that I should prolong my Life?*] For I have not Strength enough to endure any longer; nor any Hope of better Days in the Conclusion, which should make me willing to have my Life prolonged.

Ver. 12. Is *my Strength the Strength of Stones? or is my Flesh of Brass!*] GOD hath not made me insensible; and therefore do not wonder that I desire to be released from the sharpest Pains.

Ver. 13. Is *not my Help in me? and is Wisdom driven quite from me?*] Do not think my Reason hath forsaken me, and that I do not understand my self.

Ver. 14. *To him that is afflicted, Pity* should be shewed *from his Friend; but he forsaketh the Fear of the Almighty.*] Were it so, a Friend should shew me the more Pity; as you would do, but that you fear not GOD, nor remember that he can afflict you as he doth me.

Ver. 15. *My Brethren have dealt deceitfully as a Brook,* and *as the Stream of Brooks they pass away:*] My dearest Friends prove as deceitful as the Torrents, which make a great Noise, and run with a violent Stream.

Ver. 16. *Which are blackish by Reason of the Ice,* and *wherein the Snow is hid.*] When the melted Ice and Snow fall thick into them:

Ver. 17. *What Time they wax warm they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their Place.*] They promise Water, but in the Summer-time are dried up;

Ver. 18. *The Paths of their Way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.*] So that you can scarce find any Mark of the Course wherein they ran, they are so perfectly vanish'd.

Ver. 19. *The Troops of Tema looked, the Companies of Sheba waited for them.*] They that travel into our neighbouring Countries expected to quench Thirst there, where they had sometime seen so much Water;

Ver. 20. *They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.*] But were shamefully disappointed, and blusht to think they should seek Relief from such uncertain Streams.

Ver. 21. *For now ye are nothing; ye see* my *casting down, and are afraid.*] Just such are you, good for nothing; who seeing my Calamity, shrink from me.

Ver. 22. *Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a Reward for me of your Substance?*] And yet

yet I never ſent for you, nor do I ask, now you are come, any Relief from you.

Ver. 23. *Or, Deliver me from the Enemies Hand? or, Redeem me from the Hand of the mighty?*] I do not expect you ſhould deliver me from theſe Calamities, which as ſo many mighty Enemies oppreſs me.

Ver. 24. *Teach me, and I will hold my Tongue; and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred.*] Do not miſtake me, nor think that I deſpiſe the Aſſiſtance of your Counſel and Advice: no, I am ready to receive your Reproofs, and humbly to ſubmit to them, if you can better inform me.

Ver. 25. *How forcible are right Words! but what doth your arguing reprove?*] Oh what Power is there in Truth! but your Reprehenſions are ineffectual.

Ver. 26. *Do ye imagine to reprove Words, and the Speeches of one that is deſperate, which are as Wind?*] You only ſtudy to ſhew your Eloquence, and in vain uſe Words to drive me to Deſperation.

Ver. 27. *Yea, ye overwhelm the Fatherleſs, and you dig* a Pit *for your Friend.*] You fall upon him who is already depreſſed, and without Defence, and in a barbarous Manner, deviſe Counſel againſt your Friend.

Ver. 28. *Now therefore be content, look upon me, for* it is *evident unto you if I lye.*] But let it pleaſe you to conſider my Caſe a little better, and then judge if I be in the Wrong.

Ver. 29. *Return, I pray you, let it not be Iniquity; yea, return again, my Righteouſneſs is in it.*] Diſcuſs Things over again, I beſeech you, and do it fairly. I ſay, let me have a ſecond Hearing, it will but the more ſhew my Innocence.

Ver. 30. *Is there Iniquity in my Tongue? cannot my Taſt diſcern perverſe Things?*] Have I ſaid any Thing hitherto that is faulty? I do not think my Judgment is ſo corrupted, but that I can diſcern what is bad, though ſpoken by my ſelf.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Job proceeds ſtill in the Defence of his Complaint, and of his Wiſhes to ſee an End of ſo miſerable a Life; which at the beſt is full of Toil and Trouble. And ſince his Friends had ſo little Conſideration of him, he addreſſes himſelf to GOD, *and hopes he will not be angry, if he eaſe his Grief by repreſenting to him the dolefulneſs of his Condition, and expoſtulating a little with him about the Continuance of it, and his Releaſe from it.*

Ver. 1. IS there *not an appointed Time to Man upon Earth?* are not *his Days alſo like the Days of an Hireling?*] Is not the whole Life of miſerable Man a perpetual Conflict with various Troubles? And muſt he not at beſt undergo much Toil, Labour and Wearineſs?

Ver. 2. *As a Servant earneſtly deſireth the Shadow, and as an Hireling looketh for* the Reward of *his Work:* Why may I not then as paſſionately wiſh to ſee an End of it, as the Slave in a hot Day gaſps for the Refreſhment of the Shade? or the Labourer longs for the Evening, when he may reſt, and be paid for his Pains?

Ver. 3. *So am I made to poſſeſs Months of Vanity, and wearieſome Nights are appointed to me.*] I am ſure my Days are no leſs void of Contentment than theirs; and in the Night, when Men are wont to forget their Sorrows, I can do nothing but reſtleſly encreaſe them.

Ver. 4. *When I lie down, I ſay, when ſhall I ariſe, and the Night be gone? and I am full of toſſings too and fro unto the dawning of the Day.*] I no ſooner am laid down, but I wiſh to be up again; and the Night ſeems very tedious while I toſs up and down in unquiet and tormenting Thoughts, calling for the Morning.

Ver. 5. *My Fleſh is cloath'd with Worms and Clods of Duſt; my Skin is broken, and become loathſome.*] How can I do otherways, when my Body is nothing but Ulcers, full of Worms, and cruſted over with Scabs; which have made ſuch Clefts in my Skin, that I am loathſome to my ſelf?

Ver. 6. *My Days are ſwifter than a Weaver's Shuttle, and are ſpent without Hope.*] All my happy Days are run away in a Moment, and there is no hope I ſhould recover them.

Ver. 7. *O remember that my Life* is *Wind: mine Eye ſhall no more ſee Good.*] O my GOD, remember how ſhort the moſt pleaſant Life is, which when it is gone I cannot live over again.

Ver. 8. *The Eye of him that hath ſeen me, ſhall ſee me no* more: *thine Eyes* are *upon me, and I* am *not.*] I can never return to my Friends after I have left them: Thou doſt but frown upon me, and I vaniſh quite out of the World.

Ver. 9. *As the Cloud is conſumed, and vaniſheth away: ſo he that goeth down to the Grave ſhall come up no* more.] Juſt as a Cloud diſſolves on a ſudden before the Sun, ſo doth Man ſink down into his Grave, and appear no more.

Ver. 10. *He ſhall return no more to his Houſe, neither ſhall his Place know him any more.*] He muſt make his Habitation there, for hither he cannot return; but others ſhall take his Place, which will no longer acknowledge him the Owner of it.

Ver. 11. *Therefore I will not refrain my Mouth, I will ſpeak in the Anguiſh of my Spirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my Soul.*] Suffer me then to ſpeak freely, and to give vent to my Grief, by complaining a little of the inexpreſſible Miſeries which oppreſs me.

Ver. 12. *Am I a Sea, or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a Watch over me?*] Am I like a Sea, or a Whale, (or wild Beaſt) that muſt be ſhut up and confined under theſe inſupportable Sufferings, and by no means break through them.

Ver. 13. *When I ſay, My Bed ſhall comfort me, my Couch ſhall eaſe my Complaint:*] If Death may not come and put an end to them, one would have hoped at leaſt to have found ſome Intermiſſion of them by Sleep.

Ver. 14. *Then thou scarest me with Dreams, and terrifiest me through Visions:*] But then I am haunted with such frightful Dreams, and such horrid Apparitions,

Ver. 15. *So that my Soul chuseth strangling, and Death rather than my Life.*] That I had much rather die the most violent Death, than carry this Carkass any longer about with me.

Ver. 16. *I loath it, I would not live always: let me alone, for my Days are Vanity.*] It is loathsome to me: I would not, if I might, live always in it. Dismiss me therefore, since I have no Pleasure in Life, which of it self will end shortly.

Ver. 17. *What is Man, that thou shouldst magnifie him? and that thou shouldst set thine Heart upon him?*] Is mortal Man so considerable, that Thou shouldst honour him so much as to contend with him, and set thy self against him?

Ver. 18. *And that thou shouldest visit him every Morning, and try him every Moment?*] That thou shouldst send new Afflictions on him every Morning; nay, try his Strength and Courage every Moment?

Ver. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my Spittle?*] It is Time to turn away thy Displeasure from me; at least for so short a Space, as to give me leave to breathe.

Ver. 20. *I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of Men? Why hast thou set me as a Mark against thee, so that I am a Burthen to my self?*] I am not able to give thee Satisfaction for my Offences against thee, O thou Observer of Men. But why dost thou not remove me quite out of thy Sight, if I be a Burthen to thee?

Ver. 21. *And why dost thou not pardon my Transgression, and take away mine Iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the Dust, and thou shalt seek me in the Morning, but I* shall *not* be.] Or else forgive my Sin, and so far release me from its Punishment, as to let me die? which I shall do presently, and not be found to Morrow to endure these Afflictions, if thou dost not still hold me under them.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing Apologies of Job, *it seems, made little Impression on his Friends: for, he had no sooner done, but another of them, called* Bildad, *continued the Dispute, with as little Intermission, as there was between the Messengers that brought him* (Chap. I.) *the sad Tidings of his Calamities. And it doth not appear by his Discourse, that he differed at all in his Principles from* Eliphaz. *For, though he give him very good Counsel, yet, he still presses this as the Sense of all Antiquity,* (v. 8.) *that* God *ever prospers the Just, and roots out the Wicked, be they never so flourishing for a Season. And he being descended from* Shuah, *one of* Abraham's *Sons by* Keturah, (XXV. Gen. 2.) *seems to me to have a particular respect, in this Appeal to History, unto the Records, which then remained, of* God's *Blessing upon that faithful Man's Posterity, who hitherto, and long after, continued in his Religion; and of the Extirpation of those eastern People,* (*Neighbours to* Job,) *in whose Country they were settled, because of their Wickedness.*

Ver. 1. THEN *answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,*] When *Job* had made an end of this Discourse, *Bildad* (another great Friend of his, descended from *Shuah*, one of *Abraham*'s Sons by *Keturah*,) reprehended him in the same manner as *Eliphaz* had done, saying;

Ver. 2. *How long wilt thou speak these* Things? *and* how long shall *the Words of thy Mouth* be like *a strong Wind?*] Why dost thou persist to talk on this Fashion, and with such vehemence expostulate with God?

Ver. 3. *Doth* God *pervert Judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert Justice?*] Dost thou imagine the Supreme Judge will not do thee Right? or that he who needs nothing, will swerve from the Rules of Equity?

Ver. 4. *If thy Children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their Transgression;*] Is it not now reasonable to think that thy Children had highly offended Him; for which Cause he took a sudden and hasty Vengeance on them?

Ver. 5. *If thou wouldest seek unto* God *betimes, and make thy Supplication to the Almighty;*] And that if thou didst now (instead of complaining) implore his Grace and Favour with humble Supplication;

Ver. 6. *If thou* wert *pure and Upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the Habitation of thy Righteousness prosperous.*] And wert thy self sincere in Heart, and upright in thine Actions, he would certainly have a Regard to thee, and restore thy Family to its former Splendour?

Ver. 7. *Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter End should greatly increase.*] I am confident, thou art not now so low, but in Time he would make thee as high, nay, far more eminent than thou wast before.

Ver. 8. *For enquire, I pray thee, of the former Age, and prepare thy self to the Search of their Fathers.*] I do not desire thee to take my Word for it; but let those who are gone before us instruct thee, and search diligently into the Histories of the most ancient Times.

Ver. 9. (*For we* are but *of Yesterday, and know nothing, because our Days upon Earth* are *a Shadow.*)] (For, alas! we are not old enough to understand much: being able to make but few Observations, by Reason of the exceeding Shortness of our Lives.)

Ver. 10. *Shall not they teach thee,* and *tell thee, and utter Words out of their Heart?*] They will not fail to inform thee aright; and out of their long Experience, and the prudent Observations of many Ages, justifie the Truth of my Words.

Ver. 11. *Can the Rush grow up without Mire? can the Flag grow without Water?*] The Rushes and Flags we see can shoot up no higher, when they want their Mud and Moisture.

Ver.

Ver. 12. *While it is yet in his Greenneſs, and not cut down, it withereth before any other Herb.*] There is no Need to ſtop their Growth by cutting them down; for they will wither of themſelves, even when they are Freſh and Green: while ſmaller Herbs, which want not Water, continue their Beauty.

Ver. 13. *So are the Paths of all that forget* GOD, *and the Hypocrites Hope ſhall periſh:*] Juſt ſuch is the Condition of all thoſe who neglect GOD: (without whoſe Bleſſing none can flouriſh) who knows him alſo that counterfeits Piety, and will defeat him of the Happineſs he expects.

Ver. 14. *Whoſe Hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe Truſt* ſhall be *a Spiders Web.*] He may flatter himſelf with vain Hopes, and be ſo much the more miſerable; for the Things wherein he truſts are as weak as a Spider's Web.

Ver. 15. *He ſhall lean upon his Houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand: he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure.*] He may fancy his Family to be ſo great and potent, that it will ſupport him; but it ſhall fall as well as himſelf: he may endeavour to keep it up by ſtrong Alliances, but to no purpoſe.

Ver. 16. *He is green before the Sun, and his Branch ſhooteth forth in his Garden.*] Nay, he may ſeem to all the World, as well as to himſelf, to be like a flouriſhing Tree, which ſpreads its Branches in a fair Garden.

Ver. 17. *His Roots are wrapped about the Heap, and ſeeth the Place of Stones.*] Whoſe Roots have wreathed themſelves thick about the Earth, and whoſe Head lifts up it ſelf above the higheſt Edifices:

Ver. 18. *If he deſtroy him from his Place, then it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.*] But when GOD blaſts him, and plucks him up by the Roots, there ſhall remain no Remembrance that ſuch a Man ever lived in that Place.

Ver. 19. *Behold, this is the Joy of his Way, and out of the Earth ſhall others grow.*] Believe it, the Pleaſure ſuch Men take in their proſperous Eſtate is no better than this; and out of the Duſt ſhall others ſpring up, and flouriſh in their ſtead.

Ver. 20. *Behold,* GOD *will not caſt away a perfect* Man, *neither will he help the Evil Doers.*] It is a certain Truth, that GOD will not deſert the Upright, nor will he uphold the Wicked.

Ver. 21. *Till he fill thy Mouth with Laughing, and thy Lips with Rejoicing.*] Thou thy ſelf (if thou art upright) ſhalt ſtill be ſo bleſſed by Him, that thou ſhalt not be able to contain thy Joy within thy Heart; but it ſhall appear in thy Countenance, and burſt out into joyful Songs.

Ver. 22. *They that hate thee ſhall be cloathed with Shame, and the Dwelling-place of the Wicked ſhall come to Nought.*] They that rejoyced at thy Fall, ſhall be perfectly confounded at thy happy Reſtauration, and never recover themſelves, but utterly periſh.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

Job *allows what* Bildad *had well ſpoken in the Beginning of his Speech; and very religiouſly adores the Juſtice, Wiſdom, and Sovereignity of the Almighty; with whom he proteſts he had no Intention to quarrel or diſpute, but only to aſſert the contrary Maxim to that which they maintained, that Piety will not ſecure us from all Calamities, which do not ever fall upon thoſe that deſerve them. Witneſs, on one Hand, the proſperous Eſtate of wicked Princes,* Ver. 24. *(particularly of one great Prince, who then ſomewhere reigned in their neighbouring Countries) and on the other Hand, his own Inſelicity, notwithſtanding his known Integrity,* v. 25. *About this, he confeſſes, he was very much unſatisfied; tho' he knew it was in vain to argue with* GOD *about it, nor would his Affliction ſuffer him to do it.*

Ver. 1. *THEN Job anſwered and ſaid,*] When he had done, Job began again, and replied in this manner:

Ver. 2. *I know it is ſo of a Truth: but how ſhould Man be juſt with* GOD?] There need not ſo many Words to prove what thou ſaidſt in the Entrance of thy Speech; for I know very well, that GOD never perverts Judgment, and that frail Man cannot juſtify himſelf before him.

Ver. 3. *If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*] If he ſhould go about to anſwer to a thouſand Things which may be objected to him, he would hardly clear himſelf in one.

Ver. 4. *He is wiſe in Heart, and mighty in Strength: who hath hardened* himſelf *againſt him, and hath proſper'd?*] I adore alſo his Wiſdom and Power as well as his Juſtice; and am ſenſible that no Men can be ſafe who obſtinately oppoſe Him.

Ver. 5. *Which removeth the Mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his Anger.*] Tho' they were as big and as ſtrong as the Mountains, he can haſtily overturn them in a Moment, before they think of it.

Ver. 6. *Which ſhaketh the Earth out of her Place, and the Pillars thereof tremble.*] For he is able to remove the whole Earth out of its Place, and ſhatter the very Foundations of it.

Ver. 7. *Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not, and ſealeth up the Stars?*] Nor are the Heavens leſs ſubject to his Power; for neither Sun nor Stars can ſhine if he forbid them.

Ver. 8. *Which alone ſpreadeth out the Heavens, and treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea.*] He alone commands the Clouds to cover them, and makes the Sea ſwell and lift up its Waves.

Ver. 9. *Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the Chambers of the South.*] All the Conſtellations of Heaven obey him in their ſeveral Seaſons: both thoſe which we ſee, and thoſe in the other Hemiſphere.

Ver.

Ver. 10. *Which doth great Things past finding out, yea, and wonders without Number.*] In short, I agree with *Eliphaz*, (*ver.* 9.) that the Wonders he doth are innumerable, and past my Comprehension.

Ver. 11. *Lo, he goeth by me, and I see* him *not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.*] He sets them before my Eyes continually, and yet I am not able to understand them.

Ver. 12. *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What dost thou?* If he snatch away any Thing suddenly, who can make him restore it, or cause him to give an Account why he did it?

Ver. 13. If GOD *will not withdraw his Anger, the Proud helpers do stoop under him?*] If he will continue his Displeasure, there is no Remedy; but the proudest Undertaker must confess their Inability to relieve us.

Ver. 14. *How much less shall I answer him,* and *chuse out my Words* to reason *with him?*] What am I then, poor Wretch, that I should contend with his Anger? Or where shall I find out Words choice enough to plead with Him?

Ver. 15. *Whom, though I were Righteous,* yet *would I not answer,* but *I would make Supplication to my Judge.*] It is not fit for me to open my Mouth before Him in the justest Cause, unless it be to supplicate his Favour when he judges me.

Ver. 16. *If I had called, and he had answered me;* yet *would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my Voice.*] And if I had made Supplication, and he had granted my Desire, I would not think my Prayer had done the Business, (or believe my self to be out of all Danger.)

Ver. 17. *For he breaketh me with a Tempest, and multiplieth my Wounds without Cause.*] For I am not conscious of any Guilt; and yet you see with what violent Blasts he hath shattered me and my Family in Pieces, and given me one Wound after another.

Ver. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my Breath, but filleth me with Bitterness.*] No sooner was one past, but another immediately followed; which have left me not the least Pleasure in Life.

Ver. 19. *If* I speak *of Strength, lo,* he is *strong: and if of Judgment, who shall set me a Time* to plead?] If I stand upon my Might; alas! it is not to be named with his: if upon my Right; what Judge is there above him, to appoint us a Day of hearing?

Ver. 20. *If I justify my self, mine own Mouth shall condemn me: If* I say, *I* am *perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*] If I should justifie my self, there would be something in my very Plea to condemn me: it will render my Cause worse to pretend I am innocent.

Ver. 21. Though *I* were *perfect,* yet *would I not know my Soul: I would despise my Life.*] Though I were so, yet I would not be mine own Judge in the Case: I do not value my Life so much, as to contend about it.

Ver. 22. *This is one* Thing, *therefore I said it, he destroyeth the Perfect and the Wicked.*] All that I affirm is this, and I persist in that Opinion, that he lets the Innocent suffer sad Things as well as the Guilty.

Ver. 23. *If the Scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the Tryal of the Innocent.*] When a Plague comes, which kills in a Moment, he regards not though it fall upon the Innocent.

Ver. 24. *The Earth is given into the Hand of the Wicked: he covereth the Faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where,* and *who* is *he?*] And on the other Side; (so false is your Discourse,) we see the Government of the Earth given into the Hands of a wicked Prince, who blinds the Eyes of his Judges. If you deny this, tell me, where is the Man, and what is his Name, who administers Things uprightly?

Ver. 25. *Now my Days are swifter than a Post: they flee away, they see no Good.*] I my self was in Prosperity, but it is fled away swifter than a Post; and there is not the least Footstep of it remaining.

Ver. 26. *They are passed away as the swift Ships: as the Eagle* that *hasteth to the Prey.*] The Ships that are carried with the most rapid Stream, or the hungry Eagle in Chace of her Prey, do not make more haste away.

Ver. 27. *If I say, I will forget my Complaint, I will leave off my Heaviness, and comfort* my self:] I think sometime with my self, that I will forget the Miseries of which I complain, and be more chearful and couragious:

Ver. 28. *I am afraid of all my Sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.*] But then my Grief frights away that Resolution; knowing Thou wilt not release me, but make me still groan under them.

Ver. 29. If *I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?*] I am wicked in thine Account, and therefore it is to no Purpose to vindicate mine Innocence.

Ver. 30. *If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my Hands never so clean;*] Were I never so pure and clean from all Filthiness in Heart and Life;

Ver. 31. *Yet shalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own Cloaths shall abhor me.*] Thou wouldest notwithstanding cover me with filthy Ulcers, and make my neareſt Relations abhor to approach me.

Ver. 32. *For* he is *not a Man as I* am, that *I should answer him,* and *we should come together in Judgment.*] For GOD is not like me, that we should dispute upon even Terms.

Ver. 33. *Neither is there any Days-man betwixt us,* that *might lay his Hand upon us both.*] Nor is there any Body above us both to compose our Differences, and command Silence, when either of us exceeds our Bounds.

Ver. 34. *Let him take his Rod away from me, and let not his Fear terrifie me.*] As for my self, his Rod, which is upon me, keeps me in such Awe, that I cannot speak freely.

Ver. 35. Then *would I speak, and not fear him; but* it is *not so with me.*] Let him remove that, and then I shall utter my Mind with less Dread: For I am not so bad as you imagine.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter the passionate Complaints and Expostulations with GOD, *from which* Job *tells us (in the foregoing Chapter) he intended hereafter to refrain, break out afresh; and he earnestly desires to know what his Guilt is: which* GOD, *who made him, he was sure, could not but perfectly understand, if there was any; and needed not, for the Discovery of it, to expose him to these severe Torments. Which, he still is of the Opinion, may justifie his Wishes of never being born, or of dying presently after. Though, those Wishes being vain, he acknowledges it is more rational to desire, that* GOD *would be pleased to intermit his Pain awhile, if he did not think fit quite to remove it.*

Ver. 1. *MY Soul is weary of my Life, I will leave my Complaint upon my self; I will speak in the Bitterness of my Soul.*] And since Life is a Burthen to me, which can find no Ease but only in complaining, I will take that Liberty, (for it is in vain to contend against it, IX. 27.) though no Words can express my Anguish and Misery.

Ver. 2. *I will say unto* GOD, *Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*] O thou supreme Judge of all, do not pronounce thy final Sentence against me, till thou hast first shewn me what the Crimes are for which I suffer.

Ver. 3. Is it *good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? that thou shouldest despise the Work of thine Hands? and shine upon the Counsel of the Wicked?*] What Benefit wilt thou receive by my Spoils? or is it agreeable to thee to slight thine own Workmanship, and to countenance the Reasonings and Designs of evil Men?

Ver. 4. *Hast thou Eyes of Flesh? or seest thou as Man seeth?*] Dost thou judge of Things as Men do, who can see no farther than the Outside, or are led by their Affections?

Ver. 5. Are *thy Days as the Days of Man?* are *thy Years as Man's Days,*] Must thou take Time as we do to find out the Truth, and understand the Bottom of a Business?

Ver. 6. *That thou enquirest after mine Iniquity, and searchest after my Sin?*] Is that the Reason thou usest me thus severely, and hast laid me upon a Rack, and as it were examinest what I have done amiss?

Ver. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and* there is *none that can deliver me out of thine Hand.*] Surely thou (whose Vengeance none can escape) knowest, without the Help of such Torments, that I am not guilty.

Ver. 8. *Thine Hands have made me, and fashioned me together, round about; yet thou dost destroy me.*] There is no Part of me but was most elaborately made and fashioned by thee; (and therefore thou canst not be ignorant of me) though now thou art about to ruin me.

Ver. 9. *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the Clay, and wilt thou bring me into Dust again?*]. Need I put thee in Mind that I was formed by thee, as the Potter works the Clay into what Shape he pleases, and now thou art crumbling me in Pieces again?

Ver. 10. *Hast thou not poured me out as Milk, and crudled me like Cheese?*] Didst not thou gather all the scattered Parts together, and compact them in my Mother's Womb?

Ver. 11. *Thou hast cloathed me with Skin and Flesh, and hast fenced me with Bones and Sinews;*] And first cover them with Skin, and then with Flesh, and at last strengthen them with Bones and Sinews;

Ver. 12. *Thou hast granted me Life and Favour, and thy Visitation hath preserved my Spirit.*] And in due Time bring me into the World, and give me all the Comforts of Life and by thy constant Care preserve both it and them.

Ver. 13. *And these* Things *hast thou hid in thine Heart: I know that this* is *with thee.*] Thou canst not have forgotten these Things; and I am sure that this Misery I now endure is not without thy Order.

Ver. 14. *If I sin, then thou markest me; and thou wilt not acquit me from mine Iniquity.*] I cannot offend thee in the least, but thou (by whom I was thus formed) must needs know and observe it, and I cannot avoid thy Punishment for it.

Ver. 15. *If I be wicked, wo unto me; and* if *I be righteous,* yet *will I not lift up my Head:* I am *full of Confusion, therefore see thou mine Affliction;*] If I be wicked, I am undone; and if I be righteous, I am so oppressed that I cannot look upon what a lamentable Confusion I am in, beholding nothing but Misery which Way soever I cast mine Eyes.

Ver. 16. *For it encreaseth: thou huntest me as a fierce Lion; and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.*] For it grows greater and greater, while thou pursuest me as a Lion doth his Prey; and when I hope there is an End of my Troubles, sendest more to fill me with new Astonishment and Horror.

Ver. 17. *Thou renewest thy Witnesses against me, and increasest thine Indignation upon me; Changes and War* are *against me.*] Fresh Witnesses of thine Anger rise up against me: Thou multipliest thy Plagues upon me so that there is no End, but only a Change of my Conflicts.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the Womb? Oh that I had given up the Ghost, and no Eye had seen me!*] And therefore I cannot but wish, as I did at the first, that my Mother's Womb had been my Grave: happy had it been for me if I had died there, and never come into this miserable World:

Ver. 19. *I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the Womb to the Grave.*] Or that I had died as soon as I was born, and been carried from the Womb to the Grave;

Ver. 20. Are *not my Days few? cease* then, and *let me alone, that I may take Comfort a little:*] To which I am now very near. May I beg therefore but this one Favour, that since thou wilt not quite remove thy Hand, thou wilt forbear a while to strike, and let me breath and refresh my self a little;

Ver. 21. *Before I go* whence *I shall not return,* even *to the Land of Darkness, and the Shadow of Death;*]

Death;] Before I depart thither from whence I shall not return, (to ask any more Favours) be laid, I mean in my Grave, the Place of dismal Darkness:

Ver. 22. *A Land of Darkness, as Darkness* it self, and *of the Shadow of Death, without any Order, and* where *the Light* is *as Darkness*.] Where it is as Dark as Dark can be; and there is no Succession of Day and Night, as we have here, but one perpetual Night.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter gives an Account of the Sense of Zophar *about the Business in Dispute. It is uncertain whence he was descended; but probably he dwelt upon the Borders of* Idumæa, (*for there we find an ancient City called* Naama, (*XV.* Josh. 41.) *and from thence came to visit* Job *in his Affliction. But instead of joining with him in his Prayer for a little Respite from his Pain, (with which* Job *had concluded his last Discourse) he calls him an idle Talker, and accuses him of Irreverence towards* God. *Concerning whose incomprehensible Counsels, and irresistible Power, &c. he discourses with great Sense, and gives* Job *exceeding good Advice; but still follows the Opinion of the other two Friends, that he would not have been so miserable, if he had not been wicked.*

Ver. 1. THEN *answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,*] Here a third Friend of *Job*'s (*Zophar* of *Naama*) began to speak with no small Passion;

Ver. 2. *Should not the Multitude of Words be answered? and should a Man full of Talk be justified?*] Dost thou think to stop our Mouths with abundance of Words; and by thy Talkativeness to perswade us thou art innocent?

Ver. 3. *Should thy Lyes make Men hold their Peace? and when thou mockest, shall no Man make thee ashamed?*] Must we not confute thy false Allegations, but suffer thee to be insolent, because thou art miserable?

Ver. 4. *For thou hast said, My Doctrine* is *pure, and I am clean in thine Eyes.*] For thou pretendest not to have offended either in Word or Deed, and that God himself can find no Reason to condemn thee.

Ver. 5. *But, Oh that* God *would speak, and open his Lips against thee*; O that he would vouchsafe to shew thee thine Error, and with his own Mouth confute thee!

Ver. 6. *And that he would shew thee the Secrets of Wisdom, that* they are *double to that which is! know therefore that* God *exacteth of thee less than thine Iniquity* deserveth.] That he would shew thee the secret Reasons of his wise Counsels (which far surpass thine) in this Affliction; and make thee know that he would be just, if he should punish thy Sin more severely.

Ver. 7. *Canst thou by searching find out* God? *canst thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection?*] Art thou able, after all thy busy Inquiries, to give an Account of God's Judgments, and perfectly comprehend the Reasons of his Providence?

Ver. 8. It is *as high as Heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than Hell, what canst thou know?*] Thou mayst as well take a Measure of the Height of Heaven, or of the Depth of Hell.

Ver. 9. *The Measure thereof* is *longer than the Earth, and broader than the Sea.*] The Earth and the Sea, as Long and as Broad as they are, have their Bounds, but that hath none.

Ver. 10. *If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?*] If he seize upon any Thing, and shut it up, (as a Hunter doth his Prey in a Net) he will gather it, and who shall force him to restore it?

Ver. 11. *For he knoweth vain Men: he seeth Wickedness also, will he not then consider* it?] For he knows vain Men, (who mind not what they say or do) he sees their most hidden Wickedness, and will not he punish it?

Ver. 12. *For vain Man would be wise, though Man be born* like *a wild Asse's Colt.*] Shall Man void of Understanding, take the Confidence to dispute with God? Man, who is naturally as rude and blockish as a wild Asse's Colt.

Ver. 13. *If thou prepare thine Heart, and stretch out thine Hands towards him;*] If thou art truly wise, cease disputing, and fall to Prayer.

Ver. 14. *If Iniquity* be *in thine Hand, put it far away, and let not Wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacles.*] If thou art guilty of any Sin, banish it quite away, and reform thy self and thy Family.

Ver. 15. *For then shalt thou lift up thy Face without Spot, yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear*:] For then shalt thou look cheartully again, and be perfectly freed from this loathsome Condition; yea, thou shalt be settled without any Fear of losing thy Happiness.

Ver. 16. *Because thou shalt forget* thy *Misery, and remember* it *as Waters* that *pass away*:] Which shall be so great, that it shall blot out the Remembrance of thy past Miseries; or thou shalt think of them as of Waters that are run away, and will return no more.

Ver. 17. *And* thine *Age shall be clearer than the Noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the Morning.*] The rest of thy Life shall be more glorious than the Sun at Noon: even thy Darkness shall be like the Morning-light.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt be secure because there is Hope: yea, thou shalt dig* about thee, and *thou shalt take thy Rest in Safety.*] Thou shalt be confident, though any Evil threaten thee, because there is Hope God will deliver thee; thou shalt dig Wells of Water, and none shall disturb thy Tents or thy Flocks.

Ver. 19. *Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make* thee *afraid; yea, many shall make Suit unto thee.*] Thou shalt be in perfect Peace, and none shall disquiet thee; yea, the Multitude shall sue to thee for thy Favour, and the greatest Persons shall desire thy Friendship.

Ver. 20. *But the Eyes of the Wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape; and their Hope* shall be as *the giving up of the Ghost.*] But the Wicked shall in vain look for Happiness: they shall not escape their deserved Punishment, but their Hope of Deliverance shall faint away.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter Job *taxes all his* three *Friends with too great a Conceit of their own Wiſdom, which had not, as yet, taught them common Humanity to the Miſerable. And lets them underſtand, that he needs not come to them to learn, but might rather teach them the Falſeneſs of that Propoſition, wherewith* Zophar *had concluded his Speech, concerning the Infelicity of the Wicked. For the contrary, he tells them, was obvious to Senſe,* v. 7, 8, *&c. And as for what* Zophar *had diſcourſed of the Wiſdom and Power of* GOD, *he would have them know, that he was as well skill'd in thoſe Points as the beſt of them, and underſtood as much of the Hiſtory of ancient Times; particularly of the vain Attempt at the Tower of* Babel, *unto which it is probable he hath Reſpect in the* 14. *verſe; as, in all the following, he ſeems to have to what you read in XIV.* Gen. 5, 6, 7, 8. *of the rooting out of thoſe fierce Giants the* Rephaim, *and other ſuch like barbarous and rapacious People; of the Particulars of which we have now no Records remaining.*

Ver. 1. *AND Job anſwered, and ſaid,*] To this *Job* replied in ſuch Words as theſe:

Ver. 2. *No Doubt but ye* are *the People, and Wiſdom ſhall die with you.*] You believe then there are no Men of Senſe in the World beſides your ſelves: ſo that if you were dead, there would be no Wiſdom left among us.

Ver. 3. *But I have Underſtanding as well as you; I* am *not Inferiour to you: yea, who knoweth not ſuch Things as theſe?*] Let not your Vanity abuſe you; I have Underſtanding as well and as much as you; and ſo hath every Body elſe: for I ſee Nothing ſingular in all you have ſaid.

Ver. 4. *I am* as *one mocked of his Neighbour, who calleth upon* GOD, *and he anſwereth him: the juſt upright* Man is *laughed to Scorn.*] I am not ſo ſimple but I ſee how you deride your Friend, when you bid him call upon GOD that he may anſwer him. But this is no new Thing, the beſt of Men have been mock'd at on this Faſhion.

Ver. 5. *He that is ready to ſlip with* his *Feet,* is as *a Lamp deſpiſed in the Thought of him that is at Eaſe.*] Though he be as a Lamp, yet they who are dazzled with the Splendour of worldly Proſperity deſpiſe him: the Upright is never acceptable to him who is not ſtedfaſt in his Goings.

Ver. 6. *The Tabernacles of Robbers proſper, and they that provoke* GOD *are ſecure; into whoſe Hand* GOD *bringeth* abundantly.] For they thrive and flouriſh, though they rob the Juſt; and even ſuch Men live without Diſturbance, as provoke GOD with thoſe very Things which he beſtows upon them with his own Hand.

Ver. 7. *But ask now the Beaſts and they ſhall teach thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they ſhall tell thee:*] Thou needeſt not go any farther than to the Beaſts or Birds, to learn how well the Wicked fare.

Ver. 8. *Or ſpeak to the Earth, and it ſhall teach thee; and the Fiſhes of the Sea ſhall declare unto thee.*] The Earth brings forth her Fruit to them abundantly; and the Fiſhes of the Sea deny them not their Service.

Ver. 9. *Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the Hand of the* LORD *hath wrought this?* Who is ſo ſtupid as not to underſtand by all theſe, that GOD hath ordered it ſhould be thus?

Ver. 10. *In whoſe Hand* is *the Soul of every living Thing, and the Breath of all Mankind.*] Whoſe Right it is to diſpoſe of all Creatures, as well as of Mankind.

Ver. 11. *Doth not the Ear try Words? and the Mouth taſt his Meat?*] Cannot the Mind diſtinguiſh Truth from Falſhood, as exactly as the Palate ſweet from bitter?

Ver. 12. *With the Ancient* is *Wiſdom; and in length of Days, Underſtanding.*] And the older we grow, the wiſer one would think we ſhould be.

Ver. 13. *With him* is *Wiſdom and Strength, he hath Counſel and Underſtanding.*] But what is all our Wiſdom to GOD's? who (as he knows, ſo) can do all Things; and he never errs in his Underſtanding, or miſcarries in his Deſigns.

Ver. 14. *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he ſhutteth up a Man, and there can be no opening.*] It is not in the Power of any Creature to repair that which he throws down; nor to extricate that Man whom he caſts into Difficulties and Streights.

Ver. 15. *Behold, he withholdeth the Waters, and they dry up: alſo he ſendeth them out, and they overturn the Earth.*] If he deny us Rain, the Waters themſelves dry up: and he ſends ſuch Floods as break the ſtrongeſt Banks.

Ver. 16. *With him is Strength and Wiſdom: the deceived and the Deceiver* are *his.*] Nor is his Wiſdom, as I ſaid, inferiour to his Power: but the Subtlety of thoſe who deceive is as well known to him, as the Sillineſs of thoſe who are deceived.

Ver. 17. *He leadeth Counſellers away ſpoiled, and maketh the Judges Fools.*] He defeats the wiſeſt Stateſmen, and infatuates the ableſt Senators.

Ver. 18. *He looſeth the Bond of Kings, and girdeth their Loyns with a Girdle.*] So that they are not able to keep the Crown on the Head of their Kings; but they are ſtript of their royal Ornaments, and bound in Chains.

Ver. 19. *He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the Mighty.*] Their great Miniſters are carried Captives with them; nor are the moſt powerful Forces they can raiſe able to defend them.

Ver. 20. *He removeth away the Speech of the Truſty, and taketh away the Underſtanding of the aged.*] Eloquence, Fidelity, and the Prudence which hath been gained by long Experience, ſignifie as little for their Preſervation.

Ver. 21. *He poureth Contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the Strength of the Mighty.*] The Nobleneſs of their Birth or their Munificence is not at all regarded: and he diſſolves the ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt Confederacies, into which their Friends enter for their Support.

Ver. 22. *He diſcovereth deep Things out of Darkneſs, and bringeth out to Light the Shadow of Death.*] No Plot can be ſo ſecretly carried, but he diſcovers it; and brings to Light that which hath been contrived in the greateſt Obſcurity.

Ver. 23. *He increaſeth the Nations, and deſtroyeth them: he enlargeth the Nations, and ſtraitneth them* again.] Whole Nations (as well as their Princes) are perfectly under his Power; whom he ſometimes multiplies, and again diminiſhes by War, Famine, or Peſtilence. He inlarges their Bounds, and when he pleaſes reduces them into narrower Limits.

Ver. 24. *He taketh away the Heart of the chief of the People of the Earth, and cauſeth them to wander in a Wilderneſs* where there is *no Way.*] He deprives their Leaders both of Courage and Judgment; and brings them into ſuch Confuſion, that they know not which Way to turn themſelves.

Ver. 25. *They grope in the Dark without Light, and he maketh them to ſtagger like a drunken* Man.] Blind Men ſee as much as they; and their Counſels and Motions are as uncertain as thoſe of a Man in Drink.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

From the foregoing Obſervations, Job *ſtill continues to aſſert,* firſt, *his own Underſtanding to be equal, or rather ſuperiour, to theirs; who had better therefore learn of him, and know that* God *was not pleaſed to have his Providence defended by Untruths; nor to ſee Men partial, though it was in His behalf: and,* ſecondly, *his own Integrity to be ſuch, that he would ever defend it againſt all Accuſers, even before* God *himſelf: Whom he deſires to take Cognizance of the Cauſe, and to let him underſtand what the Crimes were for which he was thus ſeverely handled. For he proteſts that he was ignorant of them; though the Puniſhments he had endured were more than ſufficient to awaken the Senſe of his Guilt, he being almoſt conſumed by them.*

Ver. 1. *LO, mine Eye hath ſeen all* this, *mine Ear hath heard and underſtood it.*] I have ſaid nothing, I would have you know, but what I my ſelf have obſerved; or received from credible Reports, which I have found to be certainly true.

Ver. 2. *What ye know,* the ſame *do I know alſo: I* am *not inferiour unto you.*] Whereby you may ſee I had Reaſon to ſay, that I know as much as you, and am not to learn of you.

Ver. 3. *Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with* God.] Would to God I might ſpeak with him, and lay my Reaſons open before him; and be troubled with your Diſcourſes no longer.

Ver. 4. *But ye are Forgers of Lyes, ye* are *all Phyſicians of no Value.*] For your Concluſions are falſe; and like unſkilful Phyſicians, you exaſperate the Diſeaſes, which you cannot cure.

Ver. 5. *Oh that you would altogether hold your Peace, and it ſhould be your Wiſdom.*] The beſt Proof of your Wiſdom would be to ſay never a Word more of theſe Matters.

Ver. 6. *Hear now my Reaſoning, and hearken to the Pleadings of my Lips.*] But liſten a little to me, I beſeech you, and hear by what Reaſons I will defend my ſelf.

Ver. 7. *Will you ſpeak wickedly for* God? *and talk deceitfully for him?*] Doth God ſtand in Need of Untruths to juſtifie his Proceedings? cannot he be Righteous unleſs I be Wicked?

Ver. 8. *Will you accept his Perſon? will ye contend for* God?] Hath he ſo little Right on his Side, that you muſt ſhew him Favour? or do you think to oblige his Majeſty by doing me Wrong?

Ver. 9. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out? or as one Man mocketh another, do ye ſo mock him?*] Will it be to your Advantage, think you, that God ſhould ſtrictly examine all you have ſaid? or can he be deceived with your Flatteries, as frail Men may be?

Ver. 10. *He will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept Perſons.*] No; he will ſeverely chaſtiſe you, for deſigning to gratifie him by condemning me.

Ver. 11. *Shall not his Excellency make you afraid? and his Dread fall upon you!*] The incomparable Excellence of God, one would think, ſhould have frighted away ſuch a Thought; and his dreadful Majeſty made you not preſume to imagine he wanted your Patronage.

Ver. 12. *Your Remembrances* are *like unto Aſhes, your Bodies to Bodies of Clay.*] Whoſe Remonſtrances, on his Behalf, are no better than Duſt; and the Arguments you accumulate, but like ſo many Heaps of Dirt.

Ver. 13. *Hold your Peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what* will.] Keep Silence therefore, and do not diſturb me in my Speech; for I will omit Nothing.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore do I take my Fleſh in my Teeth, and put my Life in mine Hand?*] And I am ſo conſcious to my ſelf of my Innocence, that I muſt ſtill wonder why I ſuffer ſuch inraging Miſeries, and am expoſed to ſo many Dangers.

Ver. 15. *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him: but I will maintain mine own Ways before him.*] Aſſure your ſelves I will never forego this Plea; but ſtill maintain mine Innocence, though I were at the laſt Gaſp, and had no Hope of Life.

Ver. 16. *He alſo* ſhall be *my Salvation: for an Hypocrite ſhall not come before him.*] And I am confident God himſelf would vindicate it; for I am no Hypocrite, nor ſhall falſe Accuſations be admitted at his Tribunal.

Ver. 17. *Hear diligently my Speech, and my Declaration with your Ears.*] Do not interrupt me, but give due Attention to what I am about to ſay.

Ver. 18. *Behold now, I have ordered* my *Cauſe; I know that I ſhall be juſtified.*] See, I beſeech you, I refuſe not to be tried, but have framed a Proceſs againſt my ſelf; and am ſo ſure of the

the Goodneſs of my Cauſe, that I know I ſhall be acquitted.

Ver. 19. *Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my Tongue, I ſhall give up the Ghoſt.*] Let who will come and accuſe me, I am ready to anſwer: for to hold my Peace, on ſo juſt an Occaſion, is Death to me.

Ver. 20. *Onely do not two* Things *unto me: then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.*] Let me only beg, O great Judge of all, that thou wilt forbear to make Uſe of two Things againſt me; and then I will appear confidently, to plead my Cauſe before thee.

Ver. 21. *Withdraw thine Hand far from me: and let not thy Dread make me afraid.*] Do not continue my Pain: and let not the Sight of thy Majeſty put me in Diſorder.

Ver. 22. *Then call thou, and I will anſwer: or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.*] Then ſummon me to thy Bar, and charge me, and I will defend my ſelf; or let me queſtion thee, and do thou clear thy Proceedings againſt me.

Ver. 23. *How many* are *mine Iniquities and Sins? make me to know my Tranſgreſſion and my Sin.*] Tell me what, and how many are mine Iniquities and Sins, for I am ignorant of them: I deſire to know them all, great and ſmall, againſt thee, or againſt my Neighbour.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore hideſt thou thy Face, and holdeſt me for thine Enemy?*] For what Cauſe am I thus afflicted, and uſed as if I was thine Enemy?

Ver. 25. *Wilt thou break a Leaf driven too and fro? and wilt thou purſue the dry Stubble?*] What Honour wilt thou get by employing thy Power againſt one, who is no more able to ſtand before thee, than the Leaf to reſiſt the Wind which ſports with it, or the dry Stubble the Fire which inſtantly conſumes it?

Ver. 26. *For thou writeſt bitter Things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the Iniquities of my Youth.*] For thou haſt paſſed ſevere Decrees againſt me, and puniſheth me for the Crimes which were committed before I well knew what I did.

Ver. 27. *Thou putteſt my Feet alſo in the Stocks, and lookeſt narrowly unto all my Paths; thou ſetteſt a Print upon the Heels of my Feet.*] And thou doſt execute them as ſeverely; for I can no more eſcape than a Malefactor whoſe Feet are in the Stocks, who is encompaſſed with a vigilant Guard, and cannot ſtir a Foot from the Place where he is.

Ver. 28. *And he as a rotten Thing conſumeth, as a Garment that is moth eaten.*] But there he rots and waſts away, as I do, like a Garment that is eaten by the Moths.

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

The good Man proceeds to plead with GOD *for ſome Mitigation of his Miſeries, from the Conſideration of the Shortneſs of Life, and the Trouble that naturally belongs to it; which he thought might move Him not to add any greater Burthen of Suffering; eſpecially, conſidering that when he is dead, he cannot come into the World again (as the Plants do) to receive the Marks of his Favour. Which he hopes therefore He will beſtow upon him here, notwithſtanding the Depth of his Miſery, (which tempted him to the Borders of Impatience, v. 13.) it being very eaſie for Him to remove his Affliction, though never ſo heavy, whoſe Power is ſo great, that He removed Mountains out of their Place, and brought a Deluge, as we may ſay, of Sand, (as they ſaw ſometimes in their neighbouring Countries) to overflow the moſt fruitful Regions.*

Ver. 1. MAN *that is born of a Woman, is of few Days, and full of Trouble.*] Man is born to die; and as he cannot live long, ſo his ſhort Life is ſubject to many Cares.

Ver. 2. *He cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down: he fleeth alſo as a Shadow, and continueth not.*] He may be compared to a Flower, which is beautiful indeed, but ſuddenly cropt; or to the Shadow on a Dial, which never ſtands ſtill, but is haſting away apace.

Ver. 3. *And doſt thou open thine Eyes upon ſuch an one, and bringeſt me into Judgment with thee?*] And doſt thou concern thy ſelf ſo far about ſuch a Wretch, as to ſummon him before thy Tribunal, and there paſs dreadful Sentences againſt him, as thou doſt againſt me?

Ver. 4. *Who can bring a clean* Thing *out of an unclean? not one.*] The common Frailty of Humanity might make thee overlook him; for nothing, thou knoweſt, can be better than the Original from whence it comes.

Ver. 5. *Seeing his Days* are *determined, the Numbers of his Months* are *with thee; thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs.*] Or if he were more conſiderable than he is, yet ſince he can live but to ſuch a Time as thou haſt prefixt, beyond which he cannot prolong his Days one Moment:

Ver. 6. *Turn from him, that he may reſt, till he ſhall accompliſh, as an Hierling his Day.*] That I ſhould think might move thee not to torment him in this Manner; but to let him alone till that appointed Time come, which will be as welcome to him, as the End of his Labour is to the Hierling.

Ver. 7. *For there is Hope of a Tree, if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender Branch thereof will not ceaſe.*] And after that, there is more hope of a Tree than of him; for if it be cut down to the very Ground, the Body of it will grow again, and thruſt out new Branches;

Ver. 8. *Though the Root thereof wax old in the Earth, and the Stock thereof die in the Ground;*] Nay, tho' it hath been ſo long cut down that the Roots of it are grown old, and the Trunk ſeems quite dead;

Ver. 9. Yet *through the Scent of Waters it will bud, and bring forth Boughs like a Plant.*] Yet when it is well moiſtened it will ſhoot up again, and bring forth Boughs, as if it were but newly planted.

Ver. 10. *But Man dieth, and waſteth away: yea, Man giveth up the Ghoſt, and where is he?*] But when Man dies, he crumbles into Duſt; and none can ſet it together, to make him live again.

Ver. 11. As *the Waters fail from the Sea, and the Floud decayeth and drieth up;*] As Lakes and great Rivers are dried up, when their Waters find a new Chanel:

Ver. 12. *So Man lieth down, and riseth not till the Heavens* be *no more: they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their Sleep.*] So Man laid down in his Grave shall come no more hither; but in that Bed of Dust shall sleep perpetually.

Ver. 13. *Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the Grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy Wrath be past; that thou wouldest appoint me a set Time, and remember me!*] I wish I were buried alive, rather than suffer such Things; or that I could take Sanctuary somewhere till this Storm be over; or at least thou wouldst set me a certain Time when thou wilt deliver me.

Ver. 14. *If a Man die, shall he live* again? *all the Days of my appointed Time will I wait till my Change come.*] Then (though there be no hope of living here again after I am dead) thou shalt see I will patiently wait all the Days of that appointed Time, till that happy Change come.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a Desire to the Work of thine Hands.*] Do thou speak the Word, and it shall be done; shew thou hast some Love to thy own Workmanship.

Ver. 16. *For now thou numbrest my Steps, dost thou not watch over my Sin?*] Though now thou seemest to number every Step I have trod in all my Life, and dost not spare to punish every Fault;

Ver. 17. *My Transgression* is *sealed up in a Bag, and thou sowest up mine Iniquity.*] Having taken as great Care the Memory of them should not be lost, as if they had been sealed up in a Bag, and added one Punishment to another:

Ver. 18. *And surely the Mountains falling cometh to Nought: and the Rock is removed out of his Place.*] Yet notwithstanding the highest Mountains may fall like a Leaf, and the Rock be removed from his Place.

Ver. 19. *The Waters wear the Stones: thou washest away the Things which grow* out *of the Dust of the Earth, and thou destroyest the Hope of Man.*] The Waters, though soft, wear away the hard Stones, and the very Dust or Sand sometimes overflows the fruitful Fields: Why therefore (since such strange and unexpected Things come to pass) may there not be some Hope for miserable Man?

Ver. 20. *Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.*] Who is not able to stand before thee; but must yield and be gone for ever when thou requirest: thou spoilest his Beauty, and sendest him away into another World.

Ver. 21. *His Sons come to Honour, and he knoweth* it *not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth* it *not of them.*] And then whether his Children, whom he leaves behind, be rich, or whether they be poor, it is indifferent to him; for he knows not what passes here.

Ver. 22. *But his Flesh upon him shall have Pain, and his Soul within him shall mourn.*] But while he is in Flesh he cannot but be in Pain for them, and his Soul is inwardly grieved to see their Misery.

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter Eliphaz *renews the Dispute with more Eagerness and Fierceness than before; being very angry that* Job *slighted them so much, and thought himself so wise, (as he interpreted it) that he disdained their Exhortations, and would not follow the Counsel they had given him, of confessing his Sins, and praying to God for Forgiveness; (v. 8. VIII. 4, 5, 6.) But except this one Argument,) that he need not be ashamed to confess his Guilt, when he considered how prone all Men are to sin) there is nothing new in his Discourse; but he merely urges what he had asserted at first, from his own and the wisest Mens Observations, that they are not the Good, but the Wicked, whom God punishes with such Calamities as now were faln upon* Job. *And with great Ornaments of Speech he most admirably describes the Vengeance which God is wont to take upon impious Tyrants; having his Eye, I suppose, upon* Nimrod, *or some such mighty Oppressor.*

Ver. 1. THEN *answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,*] Then *Eliphaz*, incensed with these Reproaches, rose up again, and said;

Ver. 2. *Should a wise Man utter vain Knowledge, and fill his Belly with the East Wind?*] Dost thou pretend to be wise, who answerest us with such empty Discourses; and whose Heart is swoln with such pernicious Opinions, and vents them with so much Vehemence?

Ver. 3. *Should he reason with unprofitable Talk? or with Speeches wherewith he can do no Good?*] Is this thy Wisdom, which teaches thee to wrangle to no purpose, and to pour out Words, for which one is never the better.

Ver. 4. *Yea, thou castest off Fear, and restrainest Prayer before* GOD.] The better did I say? They destroy all Religion, and discourage Men from pouring out their Complaint in Prayer to GOD.

Ver. 5. *For thy Mouth uttereth thine Iniquity, and thou choosest the Tongue of the Crafty.*] Thou rather teachest them to dispute with him; whereby thou hast proclaimed thine Iniquity, while with fallacious Words thou seekest how to dissemble it.

Ver. 6. *Thine own Mouth condemneth thee, and not* I: *yea, thine own Lips testifie against thee.*] I need produce no farther Testimony against thee; for thy own Mouth hath done the Business, and condemned thee of Impiety.

Ver. 7. Art *thou the first Man* that *was born? or wast thou made before the Hills?*] Thou art but a Man, why dost thou talk as if thou wert GOD, or at least wert made before the World?

Ver. 8. *Hast thou heard the Secret of* GOD? *and dost thou restrain Wisdom to thy self?*] Wast thou admitted into GOD's secret Counsels, and thereby engrossedst all Wisdom to thy self?

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *What knoweſt thou that we know not? what underſtandeſt thou which is not in us?*] Wherein (to retort thy own Words upon thee) doth thy Knowledge exceed ours? Let us hear what Secret thou haſt learnt, which we do not underſtand.

Ver. 10. *With us are both the grey-headed, and very aged Men, much elder than thy Father.*] If by Age and long Experience Men acquire Wiſdom, there are ſome of us who are much elder than thy Father.

Ver. 11. Are *the Conſolations of* GOD *ſmall with thee? is there any ſecret thing with thee?*] Why doſt thou ſlight then thoſe divine Conſolations which we have given thee? Haſt thou ſome ſecret ones, which no Body elſe knows of?

Ver. 12. *Why doth thine Heart carry thee away? and what doth thine Eyes wink at,*] What makes thee have ſuch an high Opinion of thy ſelf, and in this Manner contemn us?

Ver. 13. *That thou turneſt thy Spirit againſt* GOD, *and letteſt ſuch Words go out of thy Mouth.*] Nay, oppoſe thy ſelf to GOD, and take the Boldneſs to argue with him?

Ver. 14. *What is Man, that he ſhould be clean? he which is born of a Woman, that he ſhould be righteous?*] Thou wilt maintain thy Innocence, thou ſayeſt; but thou forgetteſt ſure what thou art, and whence thou comeſt; elſe thou wouldeſt not ſtand upon thy Juſtification, not complain that thou art wronged.

Ver. 15. *Behold, he putteth no Truſt in his Saints; yea, the Heavens are not clean in his Sight.*] Remember what I told thee before, (IV. 18.) that the Angels are not immutably Good; the heavenly Inhabitants, I ſay, are not without their Spots.

Ver. 16. *How much more abominable and filthy is Man, which drinketh Iniquity like Water.*] What a loathſome and filthy Creature then is Man, who is as prone to Sin, as he is to drink when he is dry.

Ver. 17. *I will ſhew thee, hear me; and that which I have ſeen, I will declare,*] Do not ſtop thine Ears whilſt I ſhew thee thine Error, and I will ſay nothing but what mine own Eyes have ſeen,

Ver. 18. *Which wiſe Men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it.*] And which wiſe Men have obſerved, and their Fathers before them, who have reported it to their Children:

Ver. 19. *Unto whom alone the Earth was given, and no Stranger paſſed among them.*] And they no mean Perſons neither, but ſuch as were alone thought worthy to be intruſted with the Government of whole Countries, which no foreign Power could enter (as they have done thine) while they ruled.

Ver. 20. *The wicked Man travelleth with Pain all his Days, and the Number of Years is hidden to the Oppreſſor.*] The wicked Tyrant (this is their and my Obſervation) is never free from inward Torment; all his Life long he is in dread of ſome greater Oppreſſor than himſelf.

Ver. 21. *A dreadful Sound is in his Ears; in Proſperity the Deſtroyer ſhall come upon him.*] His Guilt ſo purſues him, that it makes him fear ſome Miſchief or other is ſtill falling on him; and in the moſt peaceable Time he doth not think himſelf in Safety.

Ver. 22. *He believeth not that he ſhall return out of Darkneſs, and he is waited for of the Sword.*] When he lies down, he is afraid he ſhall be kill'd before the Morning; and fanſies nothing but naked Swords round about him.

Ver. 23. *He wandreth abroad for Bread, ſaying, Where is it? he knoweth that the Day of Darkneſs is ready at his Hand.*] He ſhall wander to get a Morſel of Bread where he can find it; and when he hath it, he ſhall imagine it will prove his Poiſon.

Ver. 24. *Trouble and Anguiſh ſhall make him afraid; they ſhall prevail againſt him as a King ready to the Battel.*] The Diſtreſs and Anguiſh wherein he ſees himſelf ſhall affright him; they ſhall preſs upon him and overcome him, as a King doth his Enemies whom he hath ſurrounded with his Forces.

Ver. 25. *For he ſtretcheth out his Hand againſt* GOD, *and ſtrengtheneth himſelf againſt the Almighty.*] Which will be a juſt Puniſhment of his audacious Impiety; becauſe he defied GOD, and reſolutely ſet himſelf in Oppoſition to the Almighty:

Ver. 26. *He runneth upon him, even on his Neck, upon the thick Boſſes of his Bucklers:*] Who will ſuddenly lay faſt hold on him and kill him, though he be never ſo well armed:

Ver. 27. *Becauſe he covereth his Face with his Fatneſs, and maketh Collops of Fat on his Flanks.*] Becauſe he minds nothing but his Belly; and caſting away all Fear of GOD, nouriſhes up himſelf in Luxury, Pride, and Haughtineſs.

Ver. 28. *And he dwelleth in deſolate Cities, and in Houſes which no Man inhabiteth, which are ready to become Heaps.*] Poſſeſſing Cities which he hath laid deſolate; and Houſes out of which he hath driven the Owners, and which are running to ruine.

Ver. 29. *He ſhall not be rich, neither ſhall his Subſtance continue, neither ſhall he prolong the Perfection thereof upon the Earth.*] But the Riches he hath gotten by ſuch Violence and Oppreſſion ſhall come to Nothing: he may deſign great Things, but ſhall leave them imperfect.

Ver. 30. *He ſhall not depart out of Darkneſs, the Flame ſhall dry up his Branches, and by the Breath of his Mouth ſhall he go away.*] When his Troubles begin, they ſhall not end, till they have deſtroyed both him and his Children: one Word of GOD's Mouth (ſo mad a Thing it is to ſet himſelf againſt Heaven) will utterly conſume him.

Ver. 31. *Let not him that is deceived truſt in Vanity: for Vanity ſhall be his Recompence.*] Let ſuch Examples teach him that is ſeduced into evil Ways, not to truſt to ſuch uncertain Greatneſs; for vexatious Diſappointments ſhall be all that he will get by it.

Ver. 32. *It ſhall be accompliſhed before his Time, and his Branch ſhall not be green.*] He ſhall meet with them, when he little thinks of it; and ſee his Children wither away as well as himſelf.

Ver. 33. *He ſhall ſhake off his unripe Grape as the Vine, and ſhall caſt off his Flower as the Olive.*] They ſhall die before their Time; as the unripe Grape,

Grape, or the Bloſſom of the Vine or Olive, are ſtruck with Haily or bitten off by the Froſt.

Ver. 34. *For the Congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, and Fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of Bribery.*] The moſt numerous Families of ſuch ungodly Men ſhall have none in them left: the divine Vengeance ſhall deſtroy the Houſe which was built with ill-gotten Goods.

Ver. 35. *They conceive Miſchief, and bring forth Vanity, and their Belly prepareth Deceit.*] And they juſtly deſerve to be thus puniſhed, becauſe all they deſign and do is nothing but the Oppreſſion and Ruine of their Subjects: againſt whom, when one Deſign miſcarries, they conceive new Arts to undo them.

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

Job reproves the Vanity and Obſtinacy of Eliphaz, *in repeating the ſame things over again, and ſtill perſiſting in his Inhumanity, though he ſaw his Caſe ſo pitiable. Which he again deſcribes, to make him ſenſible how unworthily he was treated by him and the reſt of his Friends; who, in Effect, joyned with his Enemies; who took this Opportunity to rail at him. Whereas there was no Crime of his appeared to juſtifie their Accuſations, and to make good* Eliphaz *his Argument: which ſignified nothing, unleſs he meant to ſay, that* Job *was like that wicked Tyrant of whom he had diſcourſed. Which was ſo far from any Shew of Truth, that he proteſts he never hurt any Body, and was always a ſincere Lover of God, &c. v. 17, 18. The Truth of which God knew; to whoſe Bar he appeals from their unjuſt Sentence.*

Ver. 1. *THEN Job anſwered and ſaid,*] Here Job interrupted him, and ſaid,

Ver. 2. *I have heard many ſuch Things: miſerable Comforters* are *ye all.*] Thou doſt but repeat what hath been often ſaid already: ſuch Comforters as you, are as troubleſome as my Sufferings.

Ver. 3. *Shall vain Words have an End? or what emboldeneth thee that thou anſwereſt?*] May not one endleſly pour out ſuch empty Diſcourſes? (as I may with more Reaſon call thine, than thou didſt mine, XV. 3.) I wonder at thy Confidence, that having ſo little to ſay, thou ſhouldſt take upon thee to anſwer.

Ver. 4. *I alſo could ſpeak as ye* do: *if your Soul were in my Soul's ſtead, I could heap up Words againſt you, and ſhake mine Head at you.*] I could inſult as well as you; and, if we could change Conditions, let you ſee how eaſie it would be to oppreſs you with ſuch Words as theſe, in a grave Faſhion to mock at your Calamities.

Ver. 5. But *I would ſtrengthen you with my Mouth, and the moving of my Lips ſhould aſſwage* your Grief.] But I abhor the Thought of ſuch a Guilt: I would not fail to fortifie you, in that Caſe, with the beſt Arguments I could invent; and carefully abſtain from the leaſt Word that ſhould augment your Grief.

Ver. 6. *Though I ſpeak, my Grief is not aſſwaged: and* though *I forbear, what am I eaſed?*] Though as for my ſelf, I find my Miſery admits of no Conſolation: For whether I defend my Innocence, or ſilently ſuffer you to condemn me, it makes no difference.

Ver. 7. *But now he hath made me weary: Thou haſt made deſolate all my Company.*] GOD hath long ſince quite tired me with one Trouble upon another. Thou haſt not ceaſed, O GOD, till thou haſt left me neither Goods, nor Children, no nor a Friend to comfort me.

Ver. 8. *And thou haſt filled me with Wrinkles,* which *is a Witneſs* againſt me: *and my Leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth Witneſs to my Face.*] The Furrows in my Face (which is not old) ſhew the greatneſs of my Affliction: which is extreamly augmented by him, who riſes up with falſe Accuſations to take away mine Honour, as this Conſumption will do my Life.

Ver. 9. *He teareth* me *in his Wrath, who hateth me: he gnaſheth upon me with his Teeth; mine Enemy ſharpeneth his Eyes upon me.*] He rends my good Name in Pieces with a Paſſion equal to his Hatred: my Enemy is inraged againſt me, and cruelly ſets himſelf to ſpy out the leaſt Occaſion to calumniate me.

Ver. 10. *They have gaped upon me with their Mouths, they have ſmitten me upon the Cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themſelves together againſt me.*] There is no ſmall Number of ſuch as theſe, who look like ſo many wild Beaſts coming to devour me: having already moſt ſhamefully abuſed me, and joined themſelves together, to give full Satisfaction to their Wrath, wherewith they are fill'd againſt me.

Ver. 11. GOD *hath delivered me to the Ungodly, and turned me over into the Hands of the Wicked.*] So GOD will have it; who hath abandoned the Protection of me, and delivered me bound into the Hands of the Ungodly, to uſe me at their leaſure.

Ver. 12. *I was at Eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder: He hath alſo taken* me *by my Neck, and ſhaken me to Pieces, and ſet me up for his Mark.*] How happy was I heretofore! and now I am cruſhed in Pieces: From an eminent Condition he hath thrown me down into the moſt deſpicable; and there I am expoſed (as a Butt to the Arrow) to all manner of Indignities and Miſeries.

Ver. 13. *His Archers compaſs me round about, he cleaveth my Reins aſunder, and doth not ſpare; he poureth out my Gall upon the Ground.*] He is not content to take away all my Goods, and deſtroy my Family; but, to the Reproach of Friends, (which ſtrike like ſo many Darts to my very Heart,) he hath added Ulcers in every Part of my Body, with inward Pains, which rack me without Intermiſſion; and, in one Word, hath ſo mortally wounded me, as if my Bowels were already ſhed upon the Ground.

Ver. 14. *He breaketh me with Breach upon Breach, he runneth upon me like a Giant.*] Before one Wound be cloſed, he makes another; and in ſo violent a Manner, that I can make no more Reſiſtance, than a Dwarf can do againſt a Giant.

Ver.

Ver. 15. *I have ſewed Sackcloth upon my Skin, and defiled my Horn in the Duſt.*] The Sackcloth which I put on at the firſt, now cleaves ſo faſt to me, as if I had ſewed it to my Skin; and all my Authority and Honour is changed into Contempt.

Ver. 16. *My Face* is *ſoul with weeping, and on my Eye-lids* is *the Shadow of Death.*] My Face is dirty, and mine Eyes in a Manner quite put out, by the very Tears which have faln from thence.

Ver. 17. *Not for* any *Injuſtice in mine Hands; alſo my Prayer* is *pure.*] And yet I muſt ſtill ſay, I never offered ſuch a Violence as this to any Man, and was alway (ſo falſe is *Eliphaz* his Accuſation, XV. 4.) a ſincere Worſhipper of GOD.

Ver. 18. *O Earth, cover not thou my Blood, and let my Cry have no Place.*] If this be not true, let my Blood be left to the Dogs to lick, when I am dead, and let neither GOD nor Man regard my Complaint while I am alive.

Ver. 19. *Alſo now behold, my Witneſs* is *in Heaven, and my Record* is *on high.*] But what need theſe Imprecations? The great GOD who rules over all is my Witneſs, and can teſtify how juſt I have been toward my Neighbours, and how pious toward himſelf.

Ver. 20. *My Friends ſcorn me:* but *mine Eye poureth out* Tears *unto* GOD.] From your Judgment therefore (who, inſtead of comforting my Innocence, ſcornfully ſet your ſelves to defame me) I appeal to his; and beſeech him with perpetual Tears to vindicate me.

Ver. 21. *O that one might plead for a Man with* GOD, *as a Man* pleadeth *for his Neighbour?*] I am ſo aſſured of the Goodneſs of my Cauſe (as well as of his Juſtice) that I wiſh for Nothing no more, than to have it ſpeedily heard and tried by him, in the ſame Manner that Pleas are held before earthly Judges.

Ver. 22. *When a few Years are come, then I ſhall go the Way* whence *I ſhall not return.*] For my Life cannot laſt long; and I know that when I am gone, I cannot return hither again, for him to do me Juſtice.

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

Here Job *deſires he may be tried preſently before God's Tribunal, his Life being juſt upon the point to expire, as he had ſaid in the end of the former Chapter; and continues to urge again in this, becauſe his Friends were very unfit Judges in his Caſe, and had paſſed ſuch a Sentence upon him, as upright Men would never approve of. Whereby they had given him a new Vexation, to hear them talk ſo idly, and put him in Hope of recovering his Happineſs, if he would follow their Admonitions, when they ſaw him juſt dropping into the Grave, which was the only thing, he ſaith, that he could hope for.*

Ver. 1. MY *Breath is corrupt, my Days are extinct, the Graves* are ready *for me.*] My vital Spirits are ſpent, they give but a glimmering and dying Light; whereby I can ſee nothing but Graves on every ſide prepared for me.

Ver. 2. Are there *not Mockers with me? and doth not mine Eye continue in their Provocation?*] How can I ſupport my Spirits, when my Friends who ſhould comfort me, mock at all I ſay for my ſelf? This ſo bitterly exaſperates me, that I cannot take a Wink of Sleep, nor think of any Thing elſe.

Ver. 3. *Lay down now, put me in a Surety with thee; who* is *he* that *will ſtrike Hands with me?*] Once more therefore I beſeech thee, O GOD, to aſſure me that thou wilt judge my Cauſe thy ſelf: Let ſome body undertake for thee: Who is it that on thy Behalf will ingage to do me right?

Ver. 4. *For thou haſt hid their Heart from Underſtanding: Therefore ſhalt thou not exalt* them.] Not theſe Friends of mine; for they comprehend nothing of the Way of thy Judgments: Therefore thou ſhalt not confer this Honour on them, who talk ſo abſurdly.

Ver. 5. *He that ſpeaketh Flattery to* his *Friends, even the Eyes of his Children ſhall fail.*] I muſt ſpeak the Truth of them, (tho' it diſpleaſe them,) and not ſooth them up in their Errors: For he that flatters his Friends, when he ſhould reprove them, may look long enough before either he or his Children find one that will deal ſincerely with them.

Ver. 6. *He hath made me alſo a by-Word of the People, and aforetime I was as a Tabret.*] This very Perſon who ſpake laſt hath made me a Proverb in every Body's Mouth; and it is the vulgar Paſtime to talk of my Calamities.

Ver. 7. *Mine Eye alſo is dim by Reaſon of Sorrow, and all my Members* are *as a Shadow.*] No Wonder then that exceſſive Sorrow hath darkned mine Eyes; and that all the Fleſh of my Body is ſo conſumed, that I am but the Shadow of a Man.

Ver. 8. *Upright* Men *ſhall be aſtoniſhed at this, and the Innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite.*] Upright Men hereafter will be aſtoniſhed at the cruel Sentence which my Friends paſs upon me; and the Innocent will reſolutely oppoſe the Wicked, when he judges the worſe of Piety, becauſe of my Afflictions.

Ver. 9. *The Righteous alſo ſhall hold on his Way, and he that hath clean Hands ſhall be ſtronger and ſtronger.*] The Righteous will not be moved by ſuch Arguments to change his Purpoſe of well-doing; much leſs will he do any evil Action, but grow rather the better by Adverſity, and add Perſeverance to his Piety.

Ver. 10. *But as for you all, do you return, and come now: for I cannot find* one *wiſe* Man *among you.*] And truly I wiſh that all you, who have charged me ſo heavily, would conſider Things better, and hearken to what I have ſaid: For I muſt tell you again, there is not a Man of you that judges truly of my Caſe.

Ver. 11. *My Days are paſt, my Purpoſes are broken off,* even *the Thoughts of my Heart.*] Repent of your harſh Cenſures before I die, as I muſt ſpeedily, my Joys being quite gone, and all the hopeful Deſigns, which had poſſeſſed my Heart, being utterly ſubverted.

Ver. 12. *They change the Night into Day: the Light is short because of Darkness.*] Instead whereof other Thoughts are come to torment me; which will not let me sleep in the Night, nor enjoy any Pleasure in the Day.

Ver. 13. *If I wait, the Grave is mine House: I have made my Bed in the Darkness.*] If I hope for any Thing now, (as you would have me,) it is for a Grave: That's the only House I can promise my self; there I am going to rest in a Bed where I shall not be disturbed.

Ver. 14. *I have said to Corruption, Thou art my Father: to the Worm, Thou art my Mother and my Sister.*] I have already made so near an Alliance with Death, that my Father and Mother and nearest Kindred are nothing so near me as Worms and Rottenness.

Ver. 15. *And where is now my Hope? as for my Hope, who shall see it?*] How vain then are all the Hopes you would have me feed my self withal? (XI. 15, 16, *&c.*) Who shall see, when I am sure I shall not, the Happiness you would have me look for here?

Ver. 16. *They shall go down to the Bars of the Pit, when our Rest together is in the Dust.*] All these Hopes you speak of shall sink down into the Bottom of the Grave; when you my Friends, as well as I, shall take up your Lodging in the Dust.

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter Bildad *again takes up the Dispute, and pretends to reply to what* Job *had said. But I do not see any thing new, saving the Description he makes (as* Eliphaz *had done before him) of the Ruine which shall inevitably fall, according to the fixed Rules of Providence, (so he fansied) upon the Wicked and his Family; notwithstanding all the Assistance that his Friends and Allies can lend him for his Preservation. And this he seems to imply was the Fate of* Job; *whom he doth not so much as exhort to Repentance, (as he had done in his former Discourse, Chap. VIII.) being very angry with him, that he had no higher Esteem of their Wisdom.*

Ver. 1. THEN *answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,*] Then *Bildad* the *Shuhite*, seeing *Job* continue in his first Opinion, rose up, and said,

Ver. 2. *How long will it be, ere you make an End of Words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.*] How long shall we continue this Dispute? Let us make an End of it, unless he will attend better to our Reasons; then we will go on to argue with him.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore are we counted as Beasts, and reputed vile in your Sight?*] To what Purpose is it to talk with one who tells us we understand nothing, (XVII. 4, 10.) but looks upon us as a Company of dull Beasts, into whom nothing of Wisdom will enter?

Ver. 4. *He teareth himself in his Anger: Shall the Earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the Rock be removed out of his Place?*] Such is his Passion; which will not let him see how he himself, like a wild Beast, tears his own Soul in Pieces with impatient Anger. What art thou, that GOD for thy Sake should cease to govern the World by his known Laws, which are fixt and immutable?

Ver. 5. *Yea, the Light of the Wicked shall be put out, and the Spark of his Fire shall not shine.*] Say what thou wilt, it is an everlasting Truth, that the Wicked shall not continue in the Splendour wherein we sometime see him: But though he seem to sit as by a great Fire, (warm in his Wealth and Honour and Power,) there shall not remain so much as a Spark to comfort him.

Ver. 6. *The Light shall be dark in his Tabernacle, and his Candle shall be put out with him.*] The Glory of his Family shall be turned into Contempt, and all their Joy shall end in Sorrow.

Ver. 7. *The Steps of his Strength shall be straightned, and his own Counsel shall cast him down.*] The Attempts which his Power makes to preserve his Greatness, shall but more perplex him: and his own Devices shall prove his overthrow.

Ver. 8. *For he is cast into a Net by his own Feet, and he walketh upon a Snare.*] He shall intangle himself by his own Wiles; and having contrived himself into Danger, every Step he takes in Pursuance of his Designs shall farther insnare him.

Ver. 9. *The Grin shall take* him *by the Heel,* and *the Robber shall prevail against him.*] Before he is aware he shall find it so impossible to disengage himself; that they who thirst after his Blood, or Wealth, or Place, shall easily lay hold on him.

Ver. 10. *The Snare is laid for him in the Ground, and a Trap for him in the Way.*] He shall not foresee his Danger; but be caught as a Bird or a Beast in a Snare or a Trap, when he thinks himself secure in his Proceedings.

Ver. 11. *Terrours shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his Feet.*] Then he shall be surrounded with a thousand Terrours; and which Way soever he runs to save himself, he shall meet with them.

Ver. 12. *His Strength shall be Hunger-bitten, and Destruction* shall be *ready at his Side.*] He shall pine away till he hath no Strength remaining: for nothing but Mischief shall attend and accompany him in every Place.

Ver. 13. *It shall devour the Strength of his Skin:* even *the first-born of Death shall devour his Strength.*] Rottenness shall eat up his Bones; I say, his very Bones shall rot and be consumed.

Ver. 14. *His Confidence shall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the King of Terrors.*] Whatsoever he relies upon for the Support of himself and Family, it shall utterly fail him; nay, help to hasten his Death, the most dreadful of all his Enemies.

Ver. 15. *It shall dwell in his Tabernacle, because* it is *none of his: Brimstone shall be scattered upon his Habitation.*] That Man had best take heed, who shall have a Mind to dwell in his

House

House when he hath left it; for Thunder and Lightning shall destroy it.

Ver. 16. *His Roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his Branch be cut off.*] And it shall never be built up again, nor shall his Family be restored; but be like a Tree, whose Roots are so dried up in the Earth, that it shall never shoot forth any more Branches.

Ver. 17. *His Remembrance shall perish from the Earth, and he shall have no Name in the Street.*] His very Memory shall perish, as well as himself; and his Name never be mentioned among Men, unless it be to make him infamous.

Ver. 18. *He shall be driven from Light into Darkness, and chased out of the World.*] He shall be cast out of his splendid Greatness into some obscure Grave; and removed out of the World, as some unclean Thing.

Ver. 19. *He shall neither have Son nor Nephew among his People, nor any remaining in his Dwellings.*] None of his Descendents shall survive him; nor any of his Kindred remain to keep up his Name.

Ver. 20. *They that come after* him *shall be astonied at his Day, as they that went before were affrighted.*] Future Times shall read of this severe Vengeance of GOD upon him with Astonishment; as they who see it shall be seized with Horrour.

Ver. 21. *Surely such* are *the Dwellings of the Wicked, and this* is *the Place* of him that *knoweth not* GOD.] Certain it is, that this is a just Description of the miserable Condition of the Wicked: they that do not honour GOD shall thus be abased.

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

The Purpose of this Chapter (in which Job *replies to* Bildad*) is to shew, that it would be sufficient for him also merely to repeat the same Things, as they had done in ten Discourses: But the more to aggravate their Want of Compassion, or rather Cruelty, toward him, he represents several new Things, which made his Condition more deplorable than he had hitherto said. One of which was, that he could not tell the Reason why* GOD *dealt thus with him: who notwithstanding was so gracious, that in the depth of this Misery and Anguish, He affords him a Glimmering of a comfortable Hope, (which began now to appear in his Soul, and which he had hitherto wanted) that* GOD *would at last take Pity upon him, and shew his Friends their Errour, by restoring him to his former Health and Splendour. That seems to be the litteral Meaning of the 25. and 26. Verses, and of the two next that follow: Where, among other Things, he says, he doubted not but his Redeemer should* stand at last upon the Earth, *(so it is in the Hebrew, the Word* Day *not being there,) that is, quite overcome the Devil, and deliver him from these Distresses; like a mighty Conquerour, who keeps the Field, when all his Opposers are routed and fled away. But in this he was, as St.* Austin *calls him,* eximius Prophetarum, *and prophesied of the Resurrection of the Body at the last Day.*

Ver. 1. THEN *Job answered, and said,*] Then *Job*, hearing him also repeat his former Discourse, (Ch. VIII.) wherein he reflected on him as a wicked Man, burst out again into these Words:

Ver. 2. *How long will ye vex my Soul, and break me in Pieces with Words?*] Will you never cease to torment me, and to break my very Heart with your Words, which grate upon me as sorely as all the Miseries I endure?

Ver. 3. *These ten Times have ye reproached me: you are not ashamed* that *you make your selves strange to me.*] You have reproached me often enough, one would think, and yet you are not ashamed to continue your hard-hearted Censures, as if I were a perfect Stranger, and my manner of Life utterly unknown to you.

Ver. 4. *And be it indeed* that *I have erred, mine Error remaineth with my self.*] Suppose that I have done amiss, (which is more than you know) I suffer sufficiently for it; and it doth not become you to encrease my Sufferings by your Reproaches.

Ver. 5. *If indeed you will magnify your selves against me, and plead against me my Reproach:*] But if you will still proceed to lift up your Voice to declaim against me, and alledge my Calamities, which have made me contemptible, as an Argument to condemn me;

Ver. 6. *Know now that* GOD *hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his Net.*] Let this Answer suffice you, that I am sensible it is GOD's Doing; who, having laid me thus low, and environ'd me with unavoidable Miseries, calls upon you to compassionate, rather than reproach me.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I cry out of Wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no Judgment.*] And my Case is the more pitiable, because I know not the Cause of all this; nor can have any Audience or Redress, though I appeal to GOD with the loudest Cries, and protest to him that I am innocent.

Ver. 8. *He hath fenced up my Way that I cannot pass, and he hath set Darkness in my Paths.*] There is no Way open for my Escape; but his Plagues surround me so on every side, that I am at my Wits End, and know not which Way to turn my self.

Ver. 9. *He hath stript me of my Glory, and taken the Crown from my Head.*] He hath not merely stript me of my Ornaments, and taken that Dignity and Authority from me wherewith I was invested;

Ver. 10. *He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine Hope hath he removed like a Tree.*] But brought me to such utter Ruin, that like a Tree pluck'd up by the very Roots, I have not so much as Hope remaining, which is the only Comfort of the Miserable.

Ver. 11. *He hath also kindled his Wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as* one *of his Enemies.*] For he hath done all this with such

ſuch Violence, as if he were extremely incenſed againſt me, and look'd upon me as his Enemy.

Ver. 12. *His Troops come together, and raiſe up their Way againſt me, and encamp round about my Tabernacle.*] Whole Armies of Evils, by his Order, have at the ſame Time invaded me, and laid ſuch a ſtreight Siege to me, that not the ſmalleſt Comfort I had could eſcape their Fury.

Ver. 13. *He hath put my Brethren far from me, and mine Acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me.*] I look'd for ſome Relief from my Brethren, but they were ſo aſtoniſht at the Number and Dreadfulneſs of my Calamities, that they durſt not approach me; and as for my Neighbours, who formerly ſo much courted my Acquaintance, they truly keep a looff off, as if they had never known me.

Ver. 14. *My Kinſfolk have failed, and my familiar Friends have forgotten me.*] They whom Nature inclined to it have failed to perform the Duties of Humanity towards me; and they to whom I was tied by a ſtronger Bond than Nature, have forgotten the Friendſhip there was between us.

Ver. 15. *They that dwell in mine Houſe, and my Maids, count me for a Stranger: I am an Alien in their Sight.*] They that have been kindly entertain'd at my Houſe, nay, the People of my Family have forgot the Reſpect they were wont to give me, and look upon me as if they had no Relation to me.

Ver. 16. *I called my Servant, and he gave me no Anſwer: I entreated him with my Mouth.*] I called to my Slave, and he regarded not what I ſaid: no, not when I beſeeched him, as if he had been my Maſter.

Ver. 17. *My Breath is ſtrange to my Wife, though I entreated for the Childrens* Sake *of mine own Body.*] Which is the leſs Wonder, ſince I am become ſo loathſome, that my Wife will not come near me, though I have conjured her to do it by the dear Memory of our Children, thoſe common Pledges of our mutual Love.

Ver. 18. *Yea, young Children deſpiſed me; I aroſe, and they ſpake againſt me.*] After theſe Examples young Children and Fools deſpiſe me: and when I riſe up to invite them to me, abuſive Language is all the Return they make to my Courteſie.

Ver. 19. *All my inward Friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved, are turned againſt me.*] And which is worſt of all, the Men whom I entruſted with my greateſt Secrets, cannot endure me; and they who have received ſo many Tokens of my Love are become mine Enemies.

Ver. 20. *My Bone cleaveth to my Skin, and to my Fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the Skin of my Teeth.*] All theſe Afflictions have ſo waſted me, that I am little more than Skin and Bone: a Mouth to complain withal is all the Fleſh that is left me.

Ver. 21. *Have Pity upon me, have Pity upon me, O ye my Friends, for the Hand of* God *hath touched me.*] O ye my Friends, (if you ſtill deſerve that Name) who are the only Perſons that undertake to comfort me, have Pity, have Pity, I beſeech you, upon a miſerable Wretch, and conſider what Wounds the Hand of God hath given me.

Ver. 22. *Why do ye perſecute me as* God, *and are not ſatisfied with my Fleſh?*] Will you aſſume the ſame Prerogative, and think you have the ſame Right to afflict me? And doth it not ſuffice you to ſee my Body all conſumed, but you will vex my very Soul alſo with your perverſe Reaſonings?

Ver. 23. *Oh that my Words were now written! oh that they were printed in a Book!*] Oh that the Proteſtations and Appeals I have ſo often made might remain upon Record, and be regiſtred in the publick Acts and Monuments!

Ver. 24. *That they were graven with an iron Pen and Lead, in the Rock for ever!*] May they be graven upon a Plate of Lead with an iron Pen; nay, cut into a Rock or marble Pillar, to continue to all Poſterity!

Ver. 25. *For I know* that *my Redeemer liveth, and* that *he ſhall ſtand at the latter* Day *upon the Earth.*] For my Hope, which was as dead as my ſelf, (XVII. 13, 15. XIX. 10.) begins to revive; becauſe though I ſeem for the preſent to be forſaken of God, yet I know that he can hereafter deliver me out of this miſerable Condition, ſince he lives for ever; and will, I doubt not, at laſt appear victorious over all the Enemies which now oppreſs me.

Ver. 26. *And* though *after my Skin,* Worms *deſtroy this* Body, *yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee* God:] And though the Worms which have eaten my Skin, ſhould proceed to conſume the reſt of this wretched Body, yet I feel my Soul inſpired with a comfortable Belief, that before I die I ſhall ſee my ſelf reſtored, by the Mercy of God, to a happy Eſtate.

Ver. 27. *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another*; though *my Reins be conſumed within me.*] He will not let me always lie under theſe Reproaches; but I begin to aſſure my ſelf, that with theſe very Eyes I ſhall ſee him vindicate my Innocence; not only others, but I my ſelf ſhall live to ſee it: and I even faint away with vehement Deſire to behold that happy Day.

Ver. 28. *But ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing the Root of the Matter is found in me?*] Which will make you repent that you have thus perſecuted me: who have not without Ground thus long diſputed this Matter with you, but am ſure the right lies on my Side, and not on yours.

Ver. 29. *Be ye afraid of the Sword: for Wrath* bringeth *the Puniſhments of the Sword, that ye may know* there *is a Judgment.*] Take my Advice therefore in good Time, and dread the juſt Diſpleaſure of God againſt you for your perverſe Reaſonings, (for his Wrath puniſhes Mens Iniquities with the Sword, or ſome ſuch ſore Vengeance) whereby you will know to your Coſt, that there is a more righteous Judgment than yours.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

The Abrupt beginning of this Speech of Zophar *ſhews that he was in a Paſſion; which, though he pretends to bridle it, would not let him calmly conſider the Proteſtation which* Job *had made of his Innocence. But he goes on in the old common Place of the certain Downfal of the Wicked, be he never ſo powerful and well ſupported. Which he illuſtrates indeed after an excellent Faſhion, with great Variety of Figures, and Remarks upon Hiſtories as old as the World. In ſome of which he had obſerved, that the Wicked after their Fall had made notable Attempts to get up again; but by the Hand of* GOD *were ſo cruſhed, that they could never riſe more. All the Flaw in his Diſcourſe is this, (which was common to him with the reſt) that he imagined* GOD *never varied from this Method; and therefore* Job, *without doubt, was a very bad Man, though it did not appear he was ſo any other Way, but by his Infelicity.*

Ver. 1. THEN *anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid,*] Here *Zophar*, though he had no new Thing to produce, haſtily interrupted *Job*, and ſaid,

Ver. 2. *Therefore do my Thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for* this *I make haſt.*] Theſe Words of thine make my former Thoughts return again; and do ſo provoke me, that I am not able to forbear ſpeaking any longer.

Ver. 3. *I have heard the Check of my Reproach, and the Spirit of my Underſtanding cauſeth me to anſwer.*] While thou pretendeſt to correct my Errors, I have heard my ſelf rather ſhamefully reproached; yet I will not ſuffer my Paſſion to reply, but the clear Light of my Underſtanding ſhall anſwer for me.

Ver. 4. *Knoweſt thou* not *this of old, ſince Man was placed upon Earth,*] It ſeems thou doſt not yet underſtand, though it be a Truth as old as the World,

Ver. 5. *That the triumphing of the Wicked* is *ſhort, and the Joy of the Hypocrite* but *for a Moment?*] That the Happineſs which the Wicked, and he that counterfeits Piety, ſo much boaſt of, is of no long ſtanding, and will continue but for a few Moments.

Ver. 6. *Though his Excellency mount up to the Heavens, and his Head reach unto the Clouds:*] Though he ſhould be advanced to the higheſt Pitch of humane Greatneſs, and overtop all Mankind as much as the higheſt Trees do the loweſt Shrubs;

Ver. 7. Yet *he ſhall periſh for ever like his own Dung: they which have ſeen him ſhall ſay, Where* is *he?*] Yet he ſhall fall as low as his Dunghil; and, like it, be caſt out for ever with Contempt: They who ſaw him ſo flouriſhing ſhall be aſtoniſht at his Ruin, and ask with Amazement, what is become of him?

Ver. 8. *He ſhall fly away as a Dream, and ſhall not be found: yea, he ſhall be chaſed away as a Viſion of the Night.*] For his Happineſs hath no firmer Foundation than a Dream, of which we have no Remmbrance in the Morning; or if we have, all the rich Furniture and Feaſts which appear to us in our Sleep, vaniſh in an inſtant as ſoon as we awake.

Ver. 9. *The Eye alſo* which *ſaw him, ſhall* ſee him *no more: neither ſhall his Place any more behold him.*] Juſt ſo ſhall he paſs away, and all his Glory with him: Thoſe Eyes that were wont to gaze upon it with Envy, ſhall loſe the Sight of it, and never behold it more.

Ver. 10. *His Children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the Poor, and his Hands ſhall reſtore their Goods.*] His Children ſhall have enough to do to pacify the Rage of the Poor, whom he hath oppreſſed; and he ſhall be forced with Shame to reſtore with his own Hands the Goods he hath extorted from them.

Ver. 11. *His Bones are full* of the Sin *of his Youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the Duſt.*] His very Bones are full of Pain and Anguiſh. All which Puniſhments of his ſecret Sins ſhall ſtick to him till they bring him to his Grave.

Ver. 12. *Though Wickedneſs be ſweet in his Mouth,* though *he hide it under his Tongue:*] Though Wickedneſs, like ſome dangerous Meats, be pleaſant in the acting, as they are in the chewing; ſo that a Man is as deſirous to continue it, as a Glutton is to keep a long Reliſh of thoſe ſweet Morſels upon his Palate.

Ver. 13. Though *he ſpare it, and forſake it not, but keep it ſtill within his Mouth:*] Though he will by no means part with it, when he is told the Danger; but ſtill retains it, as the other doth that Meat in his Mouth, which he is told is no better than Poiſon:

Ver. 14. Yet *his Meat in his Bowels is turned,* it is *the Gall of Aſps within him.*] Yet after it is committed, it wrings and gripes the Conſcience, as thoſe dainty Bits, when they are ſwallowed, do the Bowels: The Pleaſure is turned into Pain, the Sweetneſs into ſuch Bitterneſs as brings the moſt ſudden Deſtruction.

Ver. 15. *He hath ſwallowed down Riches, and he ſhall vomit them up again:* GOD *ſhall caſt them out of his Belly.*] His ill-gotten Goods, for inſtance, which he devoured with ſo much Greedineſs and unſatiable Deſire, ſhall never thrive with him; but he ſhall be forced to refund them with a Torment far exceeding the Pleaſure wherewith he got them: GOD himſelf ſhall violently force them from him, and all his other Riches together with them:

Ver. 16. *He ſhall ſuck the Poiſon of Aſps: the Viper's Tongue ſhall ſlay him.*] Which ſhall prove as great and as deadly a Torture to him, as if, when he ſqueezed the Poor, he had ſuck'd the Poiſon of Aſps, or been bitten with a Viper.

Ver. 17. *He ſhall not ſee the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter.*] This ſhall be his Portion, inſtead of the Pleaſures of Nature and Art; which he flattered himſelf would flow in ſeveral Streams to him perpetually;

Ver. 18. *That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down; according to his Substance shall the Restitution be, and he shall not rejoice therein.*] He may endeavour again with new Labour to repair his broken Fortune; but it shall be in vain: though he should get as much Riches as he had before his Change, he shall have no Joy in them.

Ver. 19. *Because he hath oppressed,* and *hath forsaken the Poor*; because *he hath violently taken away an House which he builded not:*] When he hath with new Oppressions grinded the Poor, and left them destitute, when he hath violently seized on a House, he shall not be able to build it.

Ver. 20. *Surely he shall not feel Quietness in his Belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.*] When he hath turned, as we say, every Stone, and been as restless as a Woman in Travail; all his Pains shall bring forth nothing of that which he desired.

Ver. 21. *There shall none of his Meat be left; therefore shall no Man look for his Goods.*] He shall have no more left him to eat, than he was wont to leave for others, which shall put him out of all Hope of mending his Condition.

Ver. 22. *In the fulness of his Sufficiency he shall be in Streights: every Hand of the Wicked shall come upon him.*] The greater Fulness you can suppose him to regain of worldly Goods, the more he shall be distressed; for the Hand of every Man whom he hath afflicted shall lay hold on him to demand Satisfaction.

Ver. 23. When *he is about to fill his Belly,* God *shall cast the Fury of his Wrath upon him, and shall rain* it *upon him while he is eating.*] God himself also shall disturb him in his Enjoyments, with the sorest Effects of his divine Vengeance, which shall come pouring down from Heaven, when he thinks himself most secure.

Ver. 24. *He shall flee from the iron Weapon,* and *the Bow of Steel shall strike him through.*] He shall run from a lesser Danger to fall into a greater; as if one, avoiding the Weapon in a Man's Hand, should be shot through with a Bow of Steel.

Ver. 25. *It is drawn, and cometh out of the Body; yea, the glistering Sword cometh out of his Gall; Terrors* are *upon him.*] And tho' he should draw the Shaft out of his Body, and the Wound in his Bowels should be healed, he shall not escape so, for Terrors shall perpetually accompany him.

Ver. 26. *All Darkness* shall be *hid in his secret Places: A Fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle.*] Nothing but dreadful Dangers shall wait for him in those Places where he hoped for Safety: A Fire not kindled by Man shall devour him, and the same Pestilence or burning Fever shall take hold of the rest of his Family.

Ver. 27. *The Heaven shall reveal his Iniquity: and the Earth shall rise up against him.*] The Heaven by Thunder, Lightning or Tempests shall declare it self his Enemy; and the Earth, by wild Beasts or Serpents, or some other Way, shall make War against him.

Ver. 28. *The Increase of his House shall depart,* and his Goods *shall flow away in the Day of his Wrath.*] His whole Revenue shall melt away as Waters poured out, in the Day when God intends to punish him.

Ver. 29. *This* is *the Portion of a wicked Man from* God, *and the Heritage appointed unto him by* God.] This is the Portion which God the righteous Judge will allot to the Wicked: Thus will the Almighty reward his Blasphemies, or his other proud and insolent Words.

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

To bring the Dispute to a speedier Issue, Job *(after a short Preface, reproving their Incivility) comes close to the Business: And doth not content himself meerly with denying what they had said, but shews them where the Fallacy in their Discourse lay*; viz. *in concluding an Universal from some Particulars. For he maintains, from as good History and Observations as they could produce, that though* God *do make some wicked Men such Examples of his Vengeance, as they had said, yet he lets others, and they of the vilest Sort, Atheists and Deriders of divine Providence, live prosperously, and die peaceably, and have stately Monuments built to perpetuate their Memory. In brief, he shews there is great Variety in* God's *Proceedings about the Punishment of the Wicked; which makes them so bold as they are in their Impiety. And seems to have Respect to the History of* Ishmael, *who was* a wild, *or barbarous* Man, *grasping at all he could lay his Hands on, and persecuting* Isaac; *and yet had XII Princes descended from him, settled in their several Fortresses, as we read XVI.* Gen. 12. *XVII.* 20. *XXV.* 16. *And it is possible, to the History of* Eliphaz, *his own Country:* Esau *his Ancestour being very rich, (XXXVI.* Gen. 6, 7.*) and having many Dukes, whose Posterity afterward advanced themselves to the Title of Kings, that sprang from him, before there was any King over the Children of* Israel, *XXXVI.* Gen. 15, 31.

Ver. 1. BUT *Job answered, and said,*] But *Job*, who knew the Falseness of this Assertion, (in which *Zophar* secretly struck at him,) That God always punishes Sinners in this Manner, would not let it pass without Answer, and therefore said again unto them;

Ver. 2. *Hear diligently my Speech, and let this be your Consolations.*] Let me prevail with you to attend better than you have done hitherto to my Discourse: Do me this Kindness, and it shall serve instead of all the Consolations I promised my self from you.

Ver. 3. *Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.*] Hear me patiently, and do not so hastily interrupt me as *Zophar* just now did; (XX. 2.) who after I have done may begin, if he please, to deride me again.

Ver. 4. *As for me,* is *my Complaint to Man? and if* it were so, *why should not my Spirit be troubled?*] Have

Have I not all this while made my Appeal to GOD? why then do you interrupt me, and take upon you to pronounce that Sentence which I expect from him alone? But if my Complaint had been to you, yet, seeing there is just Cause for it, can I chuse but be vext to see you will not hear me patiently.

Ver. 5. *Mark me, and be astonished, and lay* your *Hand upon* your *Mouth.*] Consider well my Misery, and being astonisht at the Greatness of it, and of your Rudeness, be so civil now as to impose Silence on your selves, while I am speaking to you.

Ver. 6. *Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my Flesh.*] I am sure I my self am astonisht at the very Remembrance of it: were I free from it, yet the Thought of what is past makes every Joynt of my Body tremble.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in Power?*] Let me therefore again desire you to answer me this Question more leisurely; If what you have said be true, how come we to see so many wicked Men, not onely enjoy all the good Things of this Life, but grow old in their Enjoyment, and want no Honour or Power to which Riches can advance them?

Ver. 8. *Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their off spring before their Eyes.*] Nay, live to see their Children settled in the World; yea, their Childrens Children grow up like young Plants before their Eyes?

Ver. 9. *Their houses* are *safe from fear, neither* is *the Rod of* GOD *upon them.*] There is no Body disturbs their Tranquillity in any of their Habitations; nor doth GOD inflict any Punishment on them for their Sins:

Ver. 10. *Their Bull gendreth and faileth not; their Cow calveth, and casteth not her Calf.*] But extends his Care even to their Herds of Cattle; where the Kine never fail to conceive, and in due Time bring forth their Calves, and do not miscarry.

Ver. 11. *They send forth their little ones like a Flock, and their Children dance.*] And so do their Flocks of Sheep, with whom their Wives may be compared; who bring forth their little ones as easily and as numerously: and their Children dance about their Houses, like the little Lambs which skip about their Fields.

Ver. 12. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the Sound of the Organ.*] They lift up their Voice, and sing to the Timbrel and Harp: they dance for Joy at the Sound of the Pipe.

Ver. 13. *They spend their Days in Wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.*] In a Word, they prolong their Days to a great old Age, in all Manner of Pleasure; and then do not lie long languishing on a Bed of Sickness or Pain, but go easily and suddenly to their Grave.

Ver. 14. *Therefore they say unto* GOD, *Depart from us; for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways.*] And yet these are the Men that never think of GOD; or, if they do, presently bid those Thoughts be gone; for they desire to have nothing to do with him or with his Laws.

Ver. 15. *What* is *the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what Profit should we have if we pray unto him?*] They know no such Being, they say, as the Almighty; nor do they owe him any Service: and if they should worship and serve him, they do not believe they shall be a whit the better for it.

Ver. 16. *Lo, their good* is *not in their Hand: the Counsel of the wicked is far from me.*] Do not imagine that I am of their Opinion; I know very well that they cannot make themselves rich and prosperous without GOD; and therefore far be it from me to joyn with them in their Impiety.

Ver. 17. *How oft is the Candle of the wicked put out?* and how oft *cometh their Destruction upon them? GOD distributeth Sorrows in his Anger.*] But yet, I say, how oft is it that we see the Joy of these Wicked Men extinguished? Sometimes indeed GOD takes a speedy Vengeance on them; but it is not his usual Course to destroy them; and to give them such Plagues and Torments (as you speak of) for their Portion.

Ver. 18. *They are as Stubble before the Wind, and as Chaff that the Storm carrieth away.*] We do not see them so frequently as you say, driven away like Stubble before the Wind, and all their Estates scattered like the Chaff which is blown away with a Storm.

Ver. 19. GOD *layeth up his Iniquity for his Children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know* it.] And when doth GOD punish the Iniquity of the Wicked in his Children, (as you pretend he always doth, XX. 10.) and that while he lives, and beholds it himself?

Ver. 20. *His Eyes shall see his Destruction, and he shall drink of the Wrath of the Almighty.*] It is not such a common Thing as you make it, for him to see his own Ruine, and to feel the Effects of the dreadful Wrath of the Almighty.

Ver. 21. *For what Pleasure* hath *he in his House after him, when the Number of his Months is cut off in the midst?*] As for what befals his Children when he is dead, he concerns not himself; it is nothing to him though they be cut off in their most flourishing Estate.

Ver. 22. *Shall* any *teach* GOD *Knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.*] Shall we be so bold as to instruct GOD how to govern the World? and tell him he is not just, unless he punish the Wicked when we expect it? He judges the highest Beings, and therefore knows sure how to govern us.

Ver. 23. *One dieth in his full Strength, being wholly at Ease and Quiet.*] Who must not think to tie him to our Rules. For one Man dies in the highest and firmest worldly Prosperity, meeting with nothing all his Days to disturb his Quiet and Tranquillity.

Ver. 24. *His Breasts are full of Milk, and his Bones are moistened with Marrow:*] Health as well as Riches accompany him to his Grave; his Ribs are fat, and his Bones full of Marrow, even in his old Age:

Ver. 25. *And another dieth in the Bitterness of his Soul, and never eateth with Pleasure.*] When another Man (who perhaps is better than he) dies in great Pain and Anguish; after a miserable Life, in which he never enjoyed any Pleasure.

Ver.

Ver. 26. *They ſhall lie down alike in the Duſt, and the Worms ſhall cover them.*] They ſhall both alike have the Duſt for their Bed, and Worms for their Covering; and no Diſtinction, that we can ſee, be made between them.

Ver. 27. *Behold, I know your Thoughts, and the Devices* which *ye wrongfully imagine againſt me.*] I am ſenſible that in all this I very much contradict your Thoughts; which are as well known to me as to your ſelves: I ſee by what Arguments you are ſtudying to oppreſs me.

Ver. 28. *For ye ſay, where* is *the Houſe of the Prince? and where* are *the Dwelling-Places of the Wicked?*] I hear you ſay within your ſelves, what is become of the Houſe of *Job*, who lived like a Prince? What Difference is there between him and thoſe Wicked Men, whoſe Dwelling-Places are deſtroyed?

Ver. 29. *Have ye not asked them that go by the Way? and do ye not know their Tokens?*] But let me anſwer you; or rather go and ask the firſt Paſſengers you meet with, (for it is a Thing vulgarly known) and they are not intereſſed in our Diſputes, let them tell you their Obſervations about GOD's Providence:

Ver. 30. *That the Wicked is reſerved to the Day of Deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the Day of Wrath.*] Which all agree in this, that the Wicked is ſpared very often in a common Calamity; though it be very general as well as terrible, yet many of them eſcape it.

Ver. 31. *Who ſhall declare his Way to his Face? and who ſhall repay him* what *he hath done?*] Which makes the Wicked ſo bold, that none dare reprove him: much leſs is he in Danger of being puniſhed for his Offences, ſince GOD ſpares him, and Man dreads him.

Ver. 32. *Yet ſhall he be brought to the Grave, and ſhall remain in the Tomb.*] The Pomp of his Funeral is anſwerable to the Splendour wherein he lived; and a ſtately Monument is raiſed to preſerve his Memory, and repreſent him as if he were ſtill living.

Ver. 33. *The Clods of the Valley ſhall be ſweet unto him; and every Man ſhall draw after him, as* there are *innumerable before him.*] There he lies quietly in the Earth, and none diſturbs his Aſhes: he ſuffers nothing but what all Men ſhall do after him, as innumerable have done before him.

Ver. 34. *How then comfort ye me in Vain, ſeeing in your Anſwers there remaineth Falſhood?*] See then how ill you diſcharge the Office of Comforters, whoſe Anſwers have ſo little Truth in them. For you maintain that Proſperity is the inſeparable Companion of Piety; when every Body can tell you, that none flouriſh more than the Wicked, and that Calamities are common to all Mankind.

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

Though Job *had clearly ſtated the Controverſy in the foregoing Chapter, yet* Eliphaz *would not yield; but begins the Combat a* Third *time, without any Ground at all, but a pure Miſtake, as I have expreſſed it in the firſt Verſe. And to avoid the Reproof, which had been given him, of repeating merely the ſame Things; he now brings in a Catalogue, though without any Proof, (ſo much was his Anger and Bitterneſs increaſed,) of the particular Sins, both againſt* GOD, *and againſt his Neighbour, of which he ſuppoſes* Job *to have been guilty. Elſe, he ſtill boldly concludes,* GOD *would not have puniſhed him with ſuch Severity; that there was not a greater Inſtance of his Indignation to be found any where; unleſs it was in the Old World, and in* Sodom. *Yet he hath ſo much Moderation, that he invites him at laſt to Repentance, and promiſes him the happy Fruit of it; as he had done in his firſt Speech, but not in his* ſecond. *Nay, he tells him, in Concluſion, for his Incouragement, that he ſhould be able to do as much for a Nation, as* Ten *Righteous Men, could they have been found there, might have done for* Sodom.

Ver. 1. *THEN Eliphaz the Temanite anſwered, and ſaid,*] Then *Eliphaz*, not being able to deny all this, and yet not minding the Scope of it, (but imagining *Job* had accuſed the Divine Providence of Injuſtice, in ſuffering the Wicked to proſper, and the Righteous to be afflicted,) grew very angry, and ſaid,

Ver. 2. *Can a Man be profitable unto* GOD, *as he that is wiſe may be profitable unto himſelf?*] Is GOD ever the better for any thing that we do? Becauſe a wiſe Man receives great Benefit by his Vertue, ſhall we think that GOD is a Gainer by it too, and that he is bound to reward it?

Ver. 3. Is it *any Pleaſure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or* is it *gain to* him, *that thou makeſt thy Ways perfect?*] Doth he, who needs nothing, (being Poſſeſſour of all Things,) deſire thou ſhouldſt be righteous for his own Advantage? or will it turn to his Profit, if thou liveſt never ſo unblameably?

Ver. 4. *Will he reprove thee for Fear of thee? will he enter with thee into Judgment?*] Or, on the contrary, is he afraid thou ſhouldſt hurt him by thy Sins, and will therefore puniſh them? Is this the Reaſon that he now afflicts thee, to prevent the Damage they might do him?

Ver. 5. Is *not thy Wickedneſs great? and thine Iniquities infinite?*] Are not rather thy Sins againſt GOD and againſt Men ſo great and ſo numberleſs, that no other Cauſe is to be ſought of thy Sore, and multiplied Puniſhments?

Ver. 6. *For thou haſt taken a Pledge from thy Brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their Cloathing.*] For (to begin with thoſe againſt Man) thou haſt been a Tyrant, and exacted Pawns of thine own Kindred for little or nothing: and haſt ſtript even thoſe of their Garments, who had no more but juſt to cover their Nakedneſs.

Ver. 7. *Thou haſt not given Water to the weary to drink, and thou haſt with-holden Bread from the hungry.*] Thou haſt been hard hearted to the weary Traveller, when thou ſaweſt him ready to die with Thirſt or with Hunger.

Ver. 8. *But* as for *the mighty Man, he had the Earth, and the honourable Man dwelt in it.*] But

as

as for the Great and the Powerful, all thy Estate was at his Service: if he brought the Title to any Land in Question, he was sure to carry the Cause by thy Favour to him.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast sent Widows away empty, and the Arms of the fatherless have been broken.*] When at the same Time the poor Widow and Orphans (whose Protection GOD hath in a special Manner commended to us) could not obtain the Favour of having Justice done them; but were crush'd and broken by thee, and had all the means of defending themselves taken from them.

Ver. 10. *Therefore Snares* are *round about thee, and sudden Fear troubleth thee.*] Thou art guilty, sure enough, of some such Sins as these, which are the Cause that now thou art beset with these Calamities, and most dreadful Plagues have on a sudden confounded thee.

Ver. 11. *Or Darkness* that *thou canst not see, and abundance of Waters cover thee.*] Oh thy Blindness! dost thou not yet see how GOD hath proportion'd thy Punishment to thy Crimes? hath the Depth of the Afflictions wherein thou art plung'd quite taken away all Sense from thee?

Ver. 12. Is *not* GOD *in the Height of Heaven? and behold the height of the Stars, how high they are?*] Is not GOD above the Heavens? behold, he is the Head and Governour of the Stars, although they be so high; and therefore how shouldst thou think to escape his Justice?

Ver. 13. *And thou sayst, How doth* GOD *know? can he judge through the dark Cloud?*] But perhaps thou fanciest (such is thy Impiety against him, as well as Cruelty to thy Neighbour) that, because he is so high, he minds not what is done here below: or that he cannot discern the Difference of Things so very remote through such a Mist as is between us.

Ver. 14. *Thick Clouds* are *a Covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the Circuit of Heaven.*] He is wrapt, thou imaginest, in such thick Clouds, that they obscure us from his Sight: or he is confined to the Heavens, and so busied in their Affairs, that he hath no leisure to attend to ours.

Ver. 15. *Hast thou marked the old Way which wicked Men have trodden?*] But didst thou never observe, or hast thou forgotten the Course of the old Atheistical World, who ran licentiously into all manner of Wickedness?

Ver. 16. *Which were cut down out of Time, whose Foundation was overflown with a Flood.*] To whom GOD therefore put a Stop, by destroying them before their Time, and carrying them quite away with the Flood, when they thought themselves firmly settled in the Earth;

Ver. 17. *Which said unto* GOD, *Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?*] And were saying, (as thou wouldest have us believe the Wicked now do, and yet prosper, XXI. 14.) We have nothing to do with GOD, nor he with us. Dost thou remember what GOD then did to them, for their horrid Ingratitude to him?

Ver. 18. *Yet he filled their Houses with good Things, but the Counsel of the Wicked is far from me.*] Who had filled their Houses with all manner of good Things: O vile Wretches! whose wicked Thoughts I abhor as much as thou thy self, (XXI. 16.)

Ver. 19. *The Righteous see* it, *and are glad: and the Innocent laugh them to scorn.*] Whose overthrow *Noah* and his Family beholding, rejoiced in GOD's righteous Judgment: That innocent Man derided their Incredulity.

Ver. 20. *Whereas our Substance is not cut down, but the Remnant of them the Fire consumeth.*] Whereas we, who believe GOD's Care and Providence, are untouch'd in our Estates; when the Reliques of those impious Men are devoured by Fire from Heaven.

Ver. 21. *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at Peace: thereby Good shall come unto thee.*] Let me advise thee therefore, (whom GOD hath not yet quite consumed,) to join thy self to the Society of the Righteous, and to become like *Noah:* then be secure, and doubt not but by that means all Happiness shall return to thee.

Ver. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his Mouth, and lay up his Words in thine Heart.*] Do not refuse the Instruction which such Men give thee from GOD; but heartily embrace it, and faithfully preserve it to be the Rule of thy Life.

Ver. 23. *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up: thou shalt put away Iniquity far from thy Tabernacles.*] Thou shalt soon feel the comfortable Fruits of it; for if thou return to the Almighty, who hath laid thee thus low, he will return to thee, and raise thee up as high as ever: He will pardon thine Iniquity, and remove the Punishment of it far from thee and thine.

Ver. 24. *Then shalt thou lay up* Gold *as Dust, and the* Gold *of Ophir as the Stones of the Brooks.*] Thou shalt recover all thy Losses with Usury; and no more value Gold than the Dirt, on which it shall lie; nor the purest Gold more than the Pebbles in the Brook.

Ver. 25. *Yea, the Almighty shall be thy Defence, and thou shalt have Plenty of Silver.*] Thou shalt be at no Pains to secure thy vast Heaps of Gold and Silver; because thy Almighty Restorer, who gave them to thee, will defend them better than the strongest Fortress, and be himself thy Treasure.

Ver. 26. *For then shalt thou have thy Delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy Face unto* GOD.] For then thou shalt be so far from doubting of his Care over thee, that thou shalt delight to think how he loves thee: thou shalt not be dejected any more, but confidently and chearfully expect his Blessing on thee.

Ver. 27. *Thou shalt make thy Prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy Vows.*] Thou shalt ask nothing of him, but thou shalt obtain it; and have abundant Cause to be continually giving Thanks to him, for his bounteous Goodness in fulfilling thy Desires.

Ver. 28. *Thou shalt also decree a Thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the Light shall shine upon thy Ways.*] Thou shalt accomplish whatsoever thou designest, and all thy Undertakings shall be prosperous.

Ver. 29. *When* Men *are cast down, then thou shalt say,* There is *lifting up: and he shall save the humble Person.*] Thou shalt pray to GOD also to lift up others, who are in a low Condition; and he shall grant thy Petitions, by delivering him that is depressed.

Ver. 30. *He shall deliver the Island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the Pureness of thine Hands.*] Yea, a whole Country shall owe its Safety to thy Innocence: it shall be delivered by thy pious Prayers and blameless Actions.

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

To the foregoing Discourse of Eliphaz, Job *thought at first to make no Answer, but only by Complaints of their Injustice, and fresh Appeals to God: by whom he desires, more earnestly than ever, to be tried; being assured that he would acquit him. And though for the present God was not pleased to give him Audience, (of which he complains with too much Passion;) yet he maintains that Hope, which began to appear in his Soul, (in his last Discourse with* Bildad, *Ch. XIX.) that God would at last clear him from all the Aspersions which were cast upon him.*

Ver. 1. THEN *Job answered, and said,*] Then Job, hearing his Person thus defamed, and his Discourse perverted, renewed his Complaints, and said,

Ver. 2. *Even to Day* is *my Complaint bitter: my Stroke is heavier than my groaning.*] Still my just Defence of my self is judged to be Rebellion against GOD: which renders my Sufferings heavier than all my Sighs and Groans can express:

Ver. 3. *Oh that I knew where I might find him!* that *I might come* even *to his Seat!*] And makes me once more appeal to GOD, and wish I could be admitted into his Presence, (so free from the Conscience of any Guilt,) and Approach even to his Judgment-Seat.

Ver. 4. *I would order* my *Cause before him, and fill my Mouth with Arguments.*] I would set before him the Justice of my Cause; and fill my Mouth with Confutations of your false Accusations.

Ver. 5. *I would know the Words* which *he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.*] I would press to know his Judgment of me, and diligently attend to the Sentence which he would pass upon me.

Ver. 6. *Will he plead against me with* his *great Power? No, but he would put* Strength *in me.*] Do you think he would make no other Use of his absolute Power than to oppress me? I cannot believe it; he would rather imploy it to support me;

Ver. 7. *There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my Judge.*] Till at his Bar I had proved my self a Righteous Person, and been perfectly acquitted by him my righteous Judge.

Ver. 8. *Behold I go forward, but he* is *not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him:*] But all these, alas! are vain Wishes; for which Way soever I turn my self, whether to the East, or to the West, I cannot see him appear to do me Right.

Ver. 9. *On the left Hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold* him: *he hideth himself on the right Hand that I cannot see* him.] He works and moves invisibly in all other Quarters of the World; but I can discover nothing he does to clear my Innocence.

Ver. 10. *But he knoweth the Way that I take:* when *he hath tried me, I shall come forth as Gold.*] My only Comfort is, that though I cannot know all his Ways, yet he, being everywhere, knows the whole Course of my Life: and when he hath proved me by these Afflictions, as Gold is by the Fire, I doubt not, I shall be cleared from these Imputations, which you lay upon me.

Ver. 11. *My Foot hath held his Steps, his Way have I kept, and not declined.*] I am sure I have ever followed his Guidance, and so stedfastly observed his Commandments, that no Temptation hath made me swerve from them.

Ver. 12. *Neither have I gone back from the Commandment of his Lips, I have esteemed the Words of his Mouth more than my necessary* Food.] I have prevented the Advice you give me, (XXII. 22.) having never done otherwise than he bid me, and laid up his Words more carefully than my necessary Provision for this Life.

Ver. 13. *But he* is *in one* Mind, *and who can turn him? and* what *his Soul desireth, even* that *he doth.*] But for the present this doth not at all move him to relieve me: He continues his Purpose, (whatever it be) and none can alter it, no more than they can hinder the fulfilling of it.

Ver. 14. *For he performeth* the thing that is *appointed for me: and many such things* are *with him.*] For what he hath resolv'd to inflict upon me, that I find he will accomplish: and many such things as these he doth, of which he will not give us the Reason.

Ver. 15. *Therefore am I troubled at his Presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.*] This terrifies me, when I reflect upon it, notwithstanding my Innocence: I tremble at the Thoughts of his absolute Power, and unsearchable Wisdom, which may think fit still to continue these Afflictions:

Ver. 16. *For* GOD *maketh my Heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me.*] Which by the Weight of them have broken my Spirit, and made me so timorous, that I cannot but dread the Danger I am in of suffering more from his Almighty Hand.

Ver. 17. *Because I was not cut off before the Darkness,* neither *hath he covered the Darkness from my Face.*] For still he keeps me alive under all these Evils which I endure, and will not let me have the Favour to die by that Hand which strikes me so severely.

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Upon farther Consideration, Job *thought good again to confute their rash Assertion, about the Plagues which always befal the Wicked, by*

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an Induction of Particulars that prove the contrary. Among which, the wild Arabs, *he tells them, are a notorious Inſtance, whoſe Profeſſion is Rapine, and yet they thrive and proſper in it,* v. 5, &c. *And ſo do the more civiliz'd Oppreſſors, of whom he ſays ſomething before, and again,* v. 11, 12. *Where he ſeems to reflect upon hard Landlords, and griping Merchants and Traffickers in Cities. To whom he adds Murtherers, Adulterers, Pirates, with ſeveral other wicked Villains, (in the Concluſion of the Chapter) who notwithſtanding die like other Men, and are not called to an Account for their enormous Crimes in this preſent World.*

Ver. 1. *WHY, ſeeing Times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him, not ſee his Days?*] But to anſwer a little what you have ſo often aſſerted: If Puniſhments from the Almighty be ſo apparent and viſible upon the Wicked, why do not they who are truly Pious, ſee theſe publick and open Judgments?

Ver. 2. Some *remove the Land-Marks; they violently take away Flocks, and feed* thereof.] Eſpecially when the Wickedneſs of ſome of them is ſo notorious, that they violate all known Rights; ſeizing on the Lands of their Neighbours, taking away their Cattle, and (not content with that) owning it when they have done, by putting them openly into their Paſtures?

Ver. 3. *They drive away the Aſs of the Fatherleſs, they take the Widow's Ox for a Pledge.*] If a poor fatherleſs Child have an Aſs left him to carry his Burthens, they drive it away on ſome Pretence or other; and have no more Mercy than to take of the Widow, for the Security of her Debt, the only Ox ſhe hath wherewith to plough her Ground.

Ver. 4. *They turn the needy out of the Way: the Poor of the Earth hide themſelves together.*] They offer Abuſes to helpleſs People upon the High-way: ſo that the meaner Sort dare not appear for Fear of their Inſolence or their Violence.

Ver. 5. *Behold,* as *wild Aſſes in the Deſart go they forth to their Work, riſing betimes for a Prey: the Wilderneſs* yieldeth *Food for them* and *for their Children.*] And you ſhall ſee others of them, who (making Pillage their Trade) leave the Cities and Towns, and go to skulk in Foreſts and deſart Places; where, becoming wild and ſavage, they live on Rapine and Spoil; in which they are ſo diligent, that thoſe Wilderneſſes (where they neither plough nor ſow) maintain their Families.

Ver. 6. *They reap* every one *his Corn in the Field: and they gather the Vintage of the Wicked.*] For they make Inrodes out of thoſe Woods into the neighbouring Fields and Vineyards, and thence wickedly carry away the Corn and the Grapes, never regarding who is the Owner of them.

Ver. 7. *They cauſe the naked to lodge without Cloathing, that* they *have no Covering in the Cold.*] They ſpare not the poor Reapers and Vintagers; but, ſtripping them to their very Skin, leave them never a Rag to defend them from the Cold, when they go to Reſt after their wearyſome Labours.

Ver. 8. *They are wet with the Showers of the Mountains, and embrace the Rock for Want of a Shelter.*] They are expoſed (poor Wretches!) to the Injury of the Weather, as they lie aſleep at the Foot of Mountains: They have no whither to run, but into Caves and Holes of Rocks; where they endeavour to ſhrowd themſelves, when they ſee a Tempeſt coming.

Ver. 9. *They pluck the fatherleſs from the Breaſt, and take a Pledge of the Poor.*] Nay, the Perſons of Men are not ſafe from the Violence of theſe Out-laws; but they ſnatch away young Children from their Mother's Breaſts, and carry away the Poor (pretending they owe them ſomething) to make them their Slaves.

Ver. 10. *They cauſe* him *to go naked without Cloathing, and they take away the Sheaf from the hungry:*] Whom when they have ſtoll'n, they will not allow ſo much as Cloaths to cover their Nakedneſs, nor let him that is ready to ſtarve eat of the Sheaf which he hath gleaned.

Ver. 11. Which *make Oil within their Walls,* and *tread* their *Wine-preſſes, and ſuffer Thirſt.*] They cauſe theſe miſerable Creatures to preſs out their Oil and their Wine in their Cellars; but let them not taſt a Drop, though they be ready to die with Thirſt.

Ver. 12. *Men groan from out of the City, and the Soul of the wounded crieth out: yea,* GOD *layeth not Folly* to them.] Whole Cities groan under the Oppreſſion of ſome or other of theſe wicked Men, and cry out like thoſe that are dying of their Wounds: and yet GOD, who knows all this, doth not make them Examples of his Diſpleaſure, nor can we tell when he will puniſh them for their Injuſtice and Cruelty.

Ver. 13. *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the Light: they know not the Ways thereof, nor abide in the Paths thereof.*] The World would be very empty, if he ſhould deſtroy all ſuch Perſons; for beſides theſe open, there are more ſecret Sinners, who look upon the Light as their Enemy: They dare not be ſeen in the Day-time; or if they be eſpied, they preſently ſeek to hide themſelves, that they may not be diſcover'd.

Ver. 14. *The Murtherer riſing with the Light, killeth the Poor and Needy, and in the Night is as a Thief.*] The Murtherer, for Inſtance, riſes before the Sun, to kill thoſe whoſe Poverty calls them up to early Labour; and then lurking all Day in the cloſe Thickets and Woods, he turns Robber, and rifles rich Mens Houſes in the Night.

Ver. 15. *The Eye alſo of the Adulterer waiteth for the Twilight, ſaying, No Eye ſhall ſee me, and diſguiſeth* his *Face.*] The Adulterer, alſo, whoſe Eye hath let an unlawful Love into his Heart, waits for the Dusk of the Evening to favour his lewd Deſire: Then he hopes no Body he meets withal will know him; but leaſt they ſhould, he wraps his Face in his Cloak to prevent Diſcovery.

Ver. 16. *In the Dark they dig through Houſes, which they had marked for themſelves in the Day-time: they know not the Light.*] And when all are at Reſt, he will dig thro' the Walls of Houſes, if there be no other Way to come at the Adultereſs: The Aſſignment was made between them in the Day-time, and the Place then mark'd out, at which he may moſt eaſily enter;

enter; but it is the Night which brings them together to act the Works of Darkneſs.

Ver. 17. *For the Morning* is *to them even as the Shadow of Death: if* one *know* them, they are in *the Terrors of the Shadow of Death.*] Theſe are their Delight: and if they chance to ſleep too long together, and the Morning ſurpriſe them, they are ready to die with Fear; if any one know them, they are in the very Agonies of Death.

Ver. 18. *He is ſwift as the Waters, their Portion is curſed in the Earth: he beholdeth not the Way of the Vineyards.*] To this wicked Crue you may add the Pirate, who robs upon the Sea, and runs from one little Creek to another in ſwift Ships: which bring him in ſo much Riches that he deſpiſes the Employment of thoſe who till the Earth and plant Vineyards, as poor and unprofitable.

Ver. 19. *Drought and Heat conſume the Snow-waters: ſo* doth *the Grave* thoſe which *have ſinned.*] And yet all theſe, after they have ſpent their Life in ſuch horrid Villanies, do not die of lingring and tormenting Diſeaſes; but go down to the Grave as eaſily as Snow-water ſinks into the dry Ground when it is melted by the Sun.

Ver. 20. *The Womb ſhall forget him, the Worm ſhall feed ſweetly on him, he ſhall be no more remembred, and Wickedneſs ſhall be broken as a Tree.*] God ſets no ſuch Mark of his Diſpleaſure upon him, but that his Mother may ſoon forget him: The Hand of Juſtice doth not hang him on a Gibbet for the Birds to feed on; but he is carried to his Grave like other Men, to be the ſweet Food of Worms. There he lies quietly, and neither he nor his Wickedneſs are any more remembred than a Tree which is broken all to Shivers.

Ver. 21. *He evil intreateth the Barren* that *beareth not: and doth not Good to the Widow.*] This is true even of him who, to hide his Villany, kills the Child in the Womb of her whom he hath deflower'd; and when he hath abuſed a poor Widow, makes her no Satisfaction.

Ver. 22. *He draweth alſo the Mighty with his Power: he riſeth up, and no* Man *is ſure of Life.*] The greateſt Perſons are not able to ſtand before him: When he riſes up to aſſaſſinate, there is no Man, be he never ſo ſtrong, is ſure of his Life.

Ver. 23. Though *it be given him* to be *in Safety, whereon he reſteth: yet his Eyes* are *upon their Ways.*] Though he give you his Hand, and promiſe you ſecurity ſo ſolemnly, that you think you may rely upon him, yet he watches all Occaſions, and lies in wait ſecretly to do you Miſchief.

Ver. 24. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone, and brought low; they are taken out of the Way, as all* other, *and cut off as the Tops of the Ears of Corn.*] Thus theſe impious Men flouriſh and are lifted up above all other; and then they depart the World without any Puniſhment: They are laid down and ſhut up in their Graves like all other Men; nay, they die as eaſily, (without thoſe tedious Pains which ſome endure) as the Top of an Ear of Corn is cropt with your Hand.

Ver. 25. *And if* it be *not ſo now, who will make me a Liar, and make my Speech nothing worth?*] All this I know to be ſo true, that I challenge all the World to diſprove me: I am ſure it is not in any Man's Power to ſhew that my Diſcourſe is frivolous.

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing Diſcourſe of Job, *in the XXIV. Chapter, was ſo undeniable, that* Bildad *begins to break off the Diſpute. For he ſays not a Word to it, but onely adviſes him to ſpeak more reverently of the Majeſty of* God, *than he imagined he had done in his Appeal to him, Chap. XXIII.*

Ver. 1. *THEN anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid,*] Then *Bildad,* (whoſe Turn it was to ſpeak,) being unable to refute what *Job* had ſaid, onely deſired him in a few Words, to beware how he reflected upon the Juſtice of God, or imagined himſelf to be juſt if he examined him. The Words were theſe.

Ver. 2. *Dominion and Fear* are *with him, he maketh Peace in his high Places.*] Take heed what thou ſayſt of God, the Sovereign of the World, who ought to be worſhipped by thee with the moſt awful Reverence; as he is in the heavenly Places, where they never rebel againſt his Orders.

Ver. 3. *Is there any Number of his Armies? and upon whom doth not his Light ariſe?*] Hath he not innumerable Troops of Angels and other Creatures, all ready to execute his Pleaſure? And where is the Man that is out of the Verge of his all-overſpreading Providence?

Ver. 4. *How then can Man be juſtified with* God? *or how can he be clean* that is *born of a Woman?*] Why then doth ſuch a pitiful Wretch as he talk of his Righteouſneſs, before this glorious Majeſty? He forgets ſure the Condition of his Birth, who pretends to Purity in his Sight.

Ver. 5. *Behold even to the Moon, and it ſhineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight.*] Let a Man lift up his Eyes as high as the Moon, nay, look as far as the Sun and the Stars of Heaven, he ſhall find that they have their Spots; nay, in his Preſence, have no Luſtre at all.

Ver. 6. *How much leſs Man* that is *a Worm, and the Son of Man* which is *a Worm.*] What can be expected then from miſerable Man or his Poſterity; who being full of Corruption whilſt they live, can be nothing but Rottenneſs when they are dead?

CHAP. XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

Job hearing Bildad *wanders ſo far from the Buſineſs, derides his grave Affectation of Wiſdom; and tells him, that though he talk'd as if he*

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thought himself fit to be a Coadjutour to GOD *Almighty, yet as his Discourse was impertinent, so it was but mean and flat, in Comparison with what he was able to speak himself, concerning the omnipotent Wisdom of* GOD: *which he sets forth in a far more lively Manner.*

Ver. 1. BUT *Job answered, and said,*] To this *Job* replied almost as briefly; saying,

Ver. 2. *How hast thou helped* him that is *without Power*? how *savest thou the Arm* that hath *no Strength?*] O wonderful Advocate! How excellently hast thou defended him who hath no need of thy Help? Dost thou think to do the Almighty any Service by such Discourses?

Ver. 3. *How hast thou counselled* him that hath *no Wisdom? and* how *hast thou plentifully declared the Thing as it is?* What admirable Advice wouldst thou give him in his Government of the World, if he would admit thee to be his Counsellour, who imagineſt, no doubt, thou aboundest with Wisdom, and hast hit the very Mark?

Ver. 4. *To whom hast thou uttered Words? and whose Spirit came from thee?*] Dost thou think me ignorant of such Things as these? or canst thou pretend to any extraordinary Inspiration concerning them?

Ver. 5. *Dead* Things *are formed from under the Waters, and the Inhabitants thereof.*] I know as well as thou canst inform me, the Power of GOD; which appears not only in the Heavens, (to which thou biddest me look,) but even in the lowest Parts of the Earth: where vast Giant-like Creatures are formed under the Water, whose Inhabitants are innumerable.

Ver. 6. *Hell* is *naked before him, and Destruction hath no Covering.*] Nor is his Knowledge, I am sensible, less than his Power; but penetrates into the greatest Depths: The very Dead, who are quite removed out of our Sight, being perfectly visible unto him.

Ver. 7. *He stretcheth out the North over the empty Place,* and *hangeth the Earth upon nothing.*] Who by his wonderful Power and Wisdom stretches out the whole World from the one Pole to the other: which he alone sustains; as he doth this Globe of Earth hanging in the Air, without any Thing to support it.

Ver. 8. *He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not rent under them.*] It is he who binds up the fluid Waters, as it were in Bags, and keeps them a long Time hanging in the Clouds: through which they do not burst all at once, but distil by Drops to moisten the Earth in due Season.

Ver. 9. *He holdeth back the Face of* his *Throne,* and *spreadeth his Cloud upon it.*] These Clouds he spreads before the glorious Face of Heaven, to restrain the Beams of the Sun from scorching the Earth.

Ver. 10. *He hath compassed the Waters with Bounds, until the Day and Night come to an End.*] He hath inclosed the Waters of the Sea in Shores; and so exactly compassed them about, that as long as the World lasts they shall not be able (be they never so furious) to exceed those Bounds, but shall break all their Rage against them into Froth.

Ver. 11. *The Pillars of Heaven tremble, and are astonished at his Reproof.*] And yet the highest Mountains, which look as if they were the Pillars and Supporters of the Heavens, quake and tremble, when he thunders and lightens upon them.

Ver. 12. *He divideth the Sea with his Power, and by his Understanding he smiteth through the Proud.*] By his Power he raises a Tempest, which makes great Furrows in the Sea, and divideth, as it were, one Part of it from another: and (such is his Wisdom) he knows how to appease it again, and depress its proud Waves into the deadest Calm.

Ver. 13. *By his Spirit he hath garnished the Heavens; his Hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.*] Finally, by his wise Contrivance the Heavens were adorned, and made thus beautiful, as we behold them: His Power made the milky Way, (and other celestial Signs) whose Windings are so admirable.

Ver. 14. *Lo, these* are *Parts of his Ways, but how little a Portion is heard of him? but the Thunder of his Power who can understand?*] And yet these are but very small Parcels of his Works: For, alas! it is very little that such as we can comprehend of him; but the utmost force of his Power is past all Understanding.

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

As Bildad *began to decline the Dispute, so* Zophar *quite gives it over: either looking upon* Job *as incurably obstinate, or (as we might more charitably conceive, were it not for what we read* XXXII. 1.) *being convinced he had more Reason on his Side. Whose Silence so raised the Spirit of* Job, *that he now triumphs over his Opponents: as the Word MASHAL, which we render PARABLE, may denote. For it signifies among the* Hebrews, *an elegant ingenious kind of Speech; excelling, and as it were, domineering over, all other, in its pithiness, or neatness, or some other rare Quality. Such is the following Discourse of* Job, *which begins (in this Chapter) with a vehement Protestation that he would never desert his Plea; nor yield to their Doctrine, that a remarkable Vengeance always attends upon Wickedness in this World: though he grants, and largely here asserts, that sometimes there doth.*

Ver. 1. MOREOVER *Job continued his Parable, and said,*] After *Job* had made some pause, and *Zophar* (whose Turn it was now to speak) had nothing at all to reply, he proceeded with greater Eloquence than ever to assert his Innocence; saying;

Ver. 2. As GOD *liveth,* who *hath taken away my Judgment, and the Almighty,* who *hath vexed my Soul;*] I protest by the eternal GOD, who, for the present, will not judge my Cause; by the Omnipotent LORD of the World, who hath loaded me with so many Afflictions, that they have taken away all the Pleasure of Life from me:

Ver. 3. *All the while my Breath is in me, and the Spirit of* GOD *is in my Nostrils,*] I protest, I say, that as long as I have Breath in my Body, and he shall enable me to speak a Word,

Ver. 4. *My Lips shall not speak Wickedness, nor my Tongue utter Deceit.*] My Tongue shall be the faithful Interpreter of mine Heart, and I will never speak otherways than I think.

Ver. 5. GOD *forbid that I should justifie you: till I die, I will not remove my Integrity from me.*] Therefore never hope I will yield to your Opinion, which I know to be false: no, I abhor the Thought of it, and will sooner die than confess the Guilt which you charge me withal.

Ver. 6. *My Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my Heart shall not reproach* me *so long as I live.*] You shall never extort that from me, but I will resolutely maintain my Righteousness, and not be perswaded by any Reasons to desert its Defence: My Conscience doth not hitherto accuse me, and it shall never upbraid me hereafter, for betraying mine Innocence.

Ver. 7. *Let mine Enemy be as the Wicked; and he that riseth up against me, as the Unrighteous.*] And let me tell you, he that sets himself against me, and would have me thought wicked, shall be found so himself in the End: I say again, he shall prove himself unrighteous sooner than me;

Ver. 8. *For what is the Hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when* GOD *taketh away his Soul?*] Who knows very well, it is Madness for a Man to counterfeit Piety, when he hath none: For though he may get Riches by that Pretence while he lives, yet what Hope hath he when he dies?

Ver. 9. *Will* GOD *hear his Cry when Trouble cometh upon him?*] Nay, before that, when any Calamity comes upon him, will GOD give any Regard to the Cries of one who regarded him so little?

Ver. 10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon* GOD?] Or will he himself have the Confidence to go to GOD, and expect any Comfort from him? will he not rather despond in such a Case, and cease to call upon him?

Ver. 11. *I will teach you by the Hand of* GOD: *that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.*] Do not disdain to learn of me, and I will make you understand what GOD doth with the Wicked; and discover to you some of the Secrets of his Almighty Providence.

Ver. 12. *Behold, all ye your selves have seen* it, *why then are ye thus altogether vain?*] Behold, there is not one of you but hath by his own Experience found what I am about to say to be certainly true; and yet, such is your Vanity, you will defend an ungrounded Opinion.

Ver. 13. *This is the Portion of a wicked Man with* GOD, *and the Heritage of Oppressours, which they shall receive of the Almighty.*] I grant that a wicked Man (but not all Wicked Men, as you maintain) doth sometimes receive such Punishment from GOD as he deserves: Which might make other tyrannical Oppressors fear to meet with the same Vengeance.

Ver. 14. *If his Children be multiplied,* it is *for the Sword: and his Off-spring shall not be satisfied with Bread.*] We have seen, for instance, his numerous Posterity fall by the Sword of Justice or War; or by the Fury of a popular Tumult: and they who escaped were reserved to perish with cruel Hunger;

Ver. 15. *Those that remain of him shall be buried in Death: And his Widows shall not weep.*] Or else with such pestilential Diseases, that none would adventure to bury them, nor did their Widows survive to lament them.

Ver. 16. *Though he heapeth up Silver as the Dust, and prepare Raiment as the Clay;*] So that if he have treasured up such Heaps of Riches, that he values Silver no more than Dust, nor costly Apparel and Furniture than the Mire of the Street;

Ver. 17. *He may prepare* it, *but the Just shall put it on, and the Innocent shall divide the Silver.*] He shall have onely the Trouble of gathering them together, but none of his shall enjoy them: GOD shall translate all these Treasures to another Family, who shall do more Good with them.

Ver. 18. *He buildeth his House as a Moth, and as a Booth* that *the Keeper maketh.*] He builds a goodly Fabrick, out of which he is as easily shaken as a Moth out of a Garment: And it shall not be more durable than the Booth, which is made for him that keeps the Fruits of a Garden.

Ver. 19. *The rich Man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: He openeth his Eyes, and he is not.*] And when he dieth, he shall have no Monument made for him: nay, while he lives it so falls out, that he looks about him, and sees that every Body hath deserted him.

Ver. 20. *Terrours take hold on him as Waters, a Tempest stealeth him away in the Night.*] Innumerable Terrours then break in upon him, and surprize him like an Inundation of Waters; the divine Vengeance, like a violent Tempest, unexpectedly hurries him away.

Ver. 21. *The East Wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and, as a Storm, hurleth him out of his Place.*] Some pestilent Vapour blasts him irrecoverably; and as certainly kills him, as a Whirlwind hurls things out of their Place.

Ver. 22. *For* GOD *shall cast upon him and not spare, he would fain flee out of his Hand.*] Or GOD shall send some other Mischiefs so fast upon him, (without any Pity to him, who had none for others,) that all the Attempts shall be in vain, which he makes to escape the Vengeance.

Ver. 23. Men *shall clap their Hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his Place.*] At which the Beholders shall rejoyce, and applaud GOD's righteous Judgment: (which I confess he sometimes executes:) They shall hiss at his Name when he is dead, in that very Place where he hath been so much magnified.

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

The Connexion of this Chapter with the foregoing, I hope I have truly expressed in the first Verse. And that being found, it is not difficult to see at what it drives; viz. to stop the busy Enquiry of Mankind, who are very wise, he sayes, in other

other Things, but have not Wit enough to comprehend the Reasons why God *doth not inflict those Punishments upon all wicked Men, which fall upon some. It is not needful to set down here, how this Argument is managed, (with such admirable Elegance of Words, and such Weightiness of Matter, as make it deserve the Name of* Mashal, Parable *or* Proverb*) because it will sufficiently appear in the* Paraphrase.

Ver. 1. *Surely, there is a Vein for the Silver, and a Place for Gold, where they fine it.*] You would have me give a Reason perhaps why God punishes some wicked Men, and not all: But the Wit and Industry of Mankind, which have discovered Mines of Silver and Gold, must not think to find out this Secret, which God hath reserved to himself.

Ver. 2. *Iron is taken out of the Earth, and Brass is molten out of the Stone.*] They invent Means to extract Iron and Brass out of the Earth and out of Stone.

Ver. 3. *He setteth an End to Darkness, and searcheth out all Perfection: The Stones of Darkness, and the Shadow of Death.*] There is no Mine so dismally dark, but there some Man or other sets Things in Order for his Work; he searches to the very Bottom of it, and finds out those Stones which lie in the most abstruse and hidden Parts of the Earth.

Ver. 4. *The Flood breaketh out from the Inhabitants*; even the Waters *forgotten of the Foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from Men.*] A Flood breaks out from some neighbouring Place, and disturbs the Miners: (for the Waters seem as if they would stagnate there, and never stir a Foot) but by the hard Labour of Man they are drained, and leave the Place dry again.

Ver. 5. As for *the Earth, out of it cometh Bread: And under it is turned up as it were Fire.*] Out of the Surface of the Earth he gets Herbs and Corn for his Food and Sustenance, and underneath it he finds Lime and Brimstone, and such like fiery Stuff for other Uses.

Ver. 6. *The Stones of it are the Place of Sapphires: and it hath Dust of Gold.*] He goes into Countries whose Stones are the Place where Sapphires are lodged, and whose Dust to him is as good as Gold.

Ver. 7. There is *a Path which no Fowl knoweth, and which the Vulture's Eye hath not seen:*] He treads in Paths which no Bird of Prey knoweth, which the most quickfighted among them hath never seen.

Ver. 8. *The Lions Whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce Lion passed by it.*] Where the wildest Beast, who search for solitary Places, never made their Den, or so much as approached, no not the ravenous Lions, whose Hunger leads them every where to seek Satisfaction.

Ver. 9. *He putteth forth his Hand upon the Rock; he overturneth the Mountains by the Roots.*] He digs through the hardest Rocks by his obstinate Labour, and undermines Mountains, that he may find the Treasure hid in their Bowels.

Ver. 10. *He cutteth out Rivers among the Rocks, and his Eyes seeth every precious Thing.*] And if he meet with Waters which hinder his Work, he cuts a Chanel through the Rock to convey them away, and never rests till he hath discovered every Thing that may requite his indefatigable Pains.

Ver. 11. *He bindeth the Floods from overflowing, and the Thing that is hid, bringeth he forth to Light.*] Nay, more than this, he stops the Course of Rivers, and leaves not a Drop remaining, that he may bring to Light all that is hidden in the Bottom of them.

Ver. 12. *But where shall Wisdom be found? and where is the Place of Understanding?*] But tho' he be so successful in these Searches, he must not think to comprehend the Reasons of wise Providence. He may study as long as he pleases, and weary himself with busy Inquiries, but never be able with all his Labour to dive into the Bottom of this Secret, why God doth not punish all the Wicked who so insolently contemn him.

Ver. 13. *Man knoweth not the Price thereof, neither is it found in the Land of the Living.*] Alas! this Wisdom is not to be purchased with all that wretched Man hath to give for it: it is not a Thing that any Part of this World affords.

Ver. 14. *The Depth saith, It is not in me: and the Sea saith, It is not with me.*] The Miners, poor Souls, dig they never so deep, are never like to come within the Reach of it; not is it to be fetch'd by the Mariner from any of those Countries to which he sails.

Ver. 15. *It cannot be gotten for Gold, neither shall Silver be weighed for the Price thereof.*] All the Gold and Silver which Men have heaped up by such long Toil and Labour, are too inconsiderable a Price to be offered for it.

Ver. 16. *It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx or the Sapphire.*] Tho' it be the purest Gold which comes from *Ophir*, together with all the precious Stones wherewith that rich Country abounds, they are of so little Value.

Ver. 17. *The Gold and the Chrystal cannot equal it: And the Exchange of it shall not be for Jewels of fine Gold.*] That if you should add the Gold and the Chrystal which are brought from other Places, with all the Vessels made by the Art of Man of the most refined and massy Gold, they could do nothing to obtain it.

Ver. 18. *No Mention shall be made of Coral, or of Pearls: For the Price of Wisdom is above Rubies.*] The precious Stones which are fetch'd out of the Mountains of the East are not worthy to be named with it: Men may dive into the Sea, and fetch up Pearls, but this Wisdom lies a great deal deeper.

Ver. 19. *The Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure Gold.*] The *Arabian* Topaz, which is so much esteemed for its wonderful Lustre, doth not come near it; nor are all the golden Ornaments, which they wear in those Parts, proportionable to it.

Ver. 20. *Whence then cometh Wisdom? and where is the Place of Understanding?*] By what means then shall we get this Wisdom of which we are so desirous? Who can shew us where it lies, that we may go and search for it?

Ver.

Ver. 21. *Seeing it is hid from the Eyes of all Living, and kept close from the Fowls of the Air.*] We may ask this Question as often as we please, but none can resolve us: For it is concealed from all Men living; the most soaring Wits were never able to disclose it.

Ver. 22. *Destruction and Death say, We have heard the Fame thereof with our Ears.*] Death is the best Informer, and the Grave the only Place where we may learn something of it. But this is all that they can tell us, (which is as far short of a full Account as a Rumour is from a certain Knowledge) that they will shortly make all Men equal, and then it will be of no great Moment, whether we have been happy or miserable.

Ver. 23. GOD *understandeth the Way thereof, and he knoweth the Place thereof.*] None but GOD understands the Way and Method of his own Providence: He alone knows the Place of that Wisdom we enquire after, which is no where else but in his own Mind.

Ver. 24. *For he looketh to the Ends of the Earth, and seeth under the whole Heaven:*] For, who should govern the World but he, whose Understanding is infinite, and sees the Motions of all Creatures, from one End of it to the other?

Ver. 25. *To make the Weight for the Winds, and he weigheth the Waters by Measure.*] Which he hath set in such exact Order, and given to them such just Measures, that the Wind cannot blow, nor the Water flow, but in those Proportions which he hath prescribed.

Ver. 26. *When he had made a Decree for the Rain, and a Way for the Lightning of the Thunder:*] To the like Laws he hath bound the Rain, and appointed the Course which the Thundering Cloud shall take.

Ver. 27. *Then did he see it, and declare it, he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.*] And when he ordered all these Things, he was pleased in the Wisdom which he saw in his Works; he made it visible and apparent; he fixed it therefore, and made these Laws perpetual; because, after all the Search that could be made, he found no Fault in it.

Ver. 28. *And unto Man he said, Behold, the Fear of the* LORD, *that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding.*] And making Man at the same Time, he imprinted this Sense upon his Heart, that he ought to be an humble Adorer, not a Censurer, of his secret Wisdom, whereby he governs the World. For the highest Wisdom and Skill that Man can attain, is to be possessed with such a religious Fear of the great LORD of all, as not to dare to do any Thing which he knows will displease him.

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

To such Discourses as these, Job *presumes his Friends would have given greater Attention than it seems they did, had not the Vileness of his present Condition made his Speeches also contemptible. And therefore he puts them in Mind, with what Reverence all his Orations were formerly received, by great and small; wishing* GOD *would restore to him those happy Days: And inserting all along so remarkable Instances of his Integrity, (especially as a Judge) in the Height of his princely Prosperity, when he had an uncontrollable Power to do as he pleased, and yet never abused it; but employed it constantly for the Defence and Comfort of the meanest People in his Province.*

Ver. 1. *Moreover Job continued his Parable, and said,*] Here *Job* made another Pause, to see if his Friends would return any Answer: But they continuing silent, he proceeded in his eloquent Vindication of himself, saying,

Ver. 2. *Oh that I were as* in *Months past, as* in *the Days* when GOD *preserved me:*] Oh that GOD would re-establish me in that happy Condition, wherein, some Time ago, I was a principal Part of his Care! You would then give a greater Regard to my Words, than you do now in my Misfortune:

Ver. 3. *When his Candle shined upon my Head,* and *when by his Light I walked* through *Darkness:*] Which hath left me nothing but only Wishes, that he would restore me those pleasant Days, when I saw nothing but continu'd Tokens of his Favour, by which I passed untouch'd through all the Inconveniencies and Troubles of this Life.

Ver. 4. *As I was in the Days of my Youth, when the Secret of* GOD was *upon my Tabernacle:*] Oh the flourishing Season of that prosperous Estate! would it were possible to recal the Felicity of those Days, when the divine Providence treated me so kindly, that all my Answers were held for Oracles:

Ver. 5. *When the Almighty* was *yet with me,* when *my Children* were *about me:*] When the Almighty Goodness had not ceased to be gracious to me; but I saw my self surrounded with my Children and Servants, waiting to know my Pleasure:

Ver. 6. *When I washed my Steps with Butter, and the Rock poured me out Rivers of Oil:*] When my Lands were so fertile, and were blessed with such Plenty, as if the Rivers had flowed with Butter and Oil:

Ver. 7. *When I went out to the Gate, through the City,* when *I prepared my Seat in the Street.*] When I went in State to the Court of Judgment, and sate on the Bench in the open Place, where the People are wont to have their Causes heard:

Ver. 8. *The young Men saw me, and hid themselves, and the Aged arose,* and *stood up.*] And the Youth seeing me appear, were seized with such Fear, that they durst not look me in the Face; and the Aged no sooner perceived me, but they rose up from their Seats; and, in Token of Reverence, stood in my Presence.

Ver. 9. *The Princes refrained talking, and laid* their *Hand on their Mouth.*] Immediately ensued a general Silence, the Princes themselves breaking off their Discourses, and not taking the Liberty to speak a Word.

Ver.

Ver. 10. *The Nobles held their Peace, and their Tongue cleaved to the Roof of their Mouth.*] The Nobles and great Commanders could not have heard me with greater Attention and Stillneſs, if they had quite loſt their Voices, or their Tongues had been tied to the Roof of their Mouths.

Ver. 11. *When the Ear heard* me, *then it bleſſed* me; *and when the Eye ſaw* me, *it gave Witneſs to me:*] And (ſo far was I from being a Tyrant, as you have accuſed me, XXII. 5, 6.) there was no Ear heard the Sentence I gave, but praiſed my Integrity; no Eye ſaw me after I had ſpoken, but you might have beheld therein the Reſpect and Honour which they all bare me.

Ver. 12. *Becauſe I delivered the Poor that cryed, and the Fatherleſs, and* him that had *none to help him.*] Becauſe I never failed to eaſe the Poor when he complained of his Oppreſſions; the Fatherleſs, and ſuch as had none to take their Parts, ever found me their Defender.

Ver. 13. *The Bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me: and I cauſed the Widow's Heart to ſing for Joy.*] I had his Prayer for my Proſperity, whoſe Life and Eſtate I preſerved, when he was in Danger of utter undoing: and I made the ſorrowful Widow ſuch a joyful Woman, that ſhe openly proclaimed my Praiſe.

Ver. 14. *I put on Righteouſneſs, and it cloathed me: My judgment* was *as a Robe and a Diadem.*] For in the Morning I put on a Reſolution to do juſtly, together with my Cloaths, and I never ſwerved from it all the Day after: But looked upon the righteous Sentence which I pronounced as a greater Ornament than the purple Robe on my Shoulder, and the Diadem upon my Head.

Ver. 15. *I was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet* was *I to the Lame.*] I inſtructed him who did not well underſtand his own Buſineſs, and aſſiſted him who wanted Means to carry on his Cauſe.

Ver. 16. *I* was *a Father to the Poor: And the Cauſe* which *I knew not, I ſearched out.*] For the Poor I had ſuch a paternal Affection, that it made me his Advocate as well as his Judge: and I never left ſtudying his Cauſe (when there was an Obſcurity in it) till I had cleared the Buſineſs, and done him Right.

Ver. 17. *And I brake the Jaws of the Wicked, and pluckt the Spoil out of his Teeth.*] By which Means I diſabled the Unjuſt to oppreſs them, and forced them to reſtore that which they had violently extorted from them.

Ver. 18. *Then I ſaid, I ſhall die in my Neſt, and I ſhall multiply* my *Days as the Sand.*] And having done ſo many vertuous Actions, and being in ſuch high Authority, I was apt to promiſe my ſelf, that after an exceeding long and happy Life, I ſhould die quietly in mine own Houſe among my Children and Friends.

Ver. 19. *My Root* was *ſpread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon my Branch.*] For, being like a Tree, whoſe Root ſpreadeth out it ſelf by the Waters, and whoſe Boughs are perpetually moiſtened by the ſweet Dew of Heaven, I thought I ſhould never wither.

Ver. 20. *My Glory* was *freſh in me, and my Bow was renewed in my Hand.*] My Eſteem and Reputation increaſed every Day, and grew greater; and ſo did my Power to defend the Authority and Dignity I had obtained.

Ver. 21. *Unto me* Men *gave Ear, and waited, and kept Silence at my Counſel.*] Though there was no need I ſhould ſo employ it; for when I ſpake, all Men gave me the greateſt Attention, and my Words were a Law to them.

Ver. 22. *After my Words they ſpake not again, and my Speech dropped upon them.*] Which when I had uttered, no Man contradicted, or ſo much as corrected, but it ſweetly inſtilled it ſelf, and ſunk into their Hearts.

Ver. 23. *And they waited for me as for the Rain: And they opened their Mouths wide,* as *for the latter Rain.*] For they expected my Opinion with the ſame eager Deſire that the Husbandman doth the Showers, after he hath ſown his Seed; they gaped for it as the thirſty Earth doth for the latter Rain, to plump the Corn.

Ver. 24. If *I laughed on them, they believed it not, and the Light of my Countenance they caſt not down.*] The Reverence they bare me was ſo great, that when I laid aſide my Gravity, and jeſted with them, they would not believe it; but ſtill took all I ſaid to be ſerious; and whatſoever Pleaſantneſs I uſed with them, it did not diminiſh my Authority among them.

Ver. 25. *I choſe out their Way, and ſate chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army, as one* that *comforteth the Mourners.*] But if I went to viſit them, they ſtill preſerved their Reſpect to me, and gave me the Pre-eminence. And as my Condeſcention to them did not make them leſs honour me, ſo their Submiſſion to me did not make me leſs familiar with them; for when I ſate as a King, guarded with many Troops of Followers, I comforted the Meaneſt, and would not ſuffer them to be dejected.

CHAP. XXX.

ARGUMENT.

From the foregoing Account of his ancient Splendor, he takes Occaſion to annex a no leſs elegant Deſcription of the Vileneſs of his preſent Condition. Hoping that the Conſideration of ſuch a prodigious Change (which he repreſents in ſeveral Particulars, and not without ſome Touches ſtill upon his Integrity) might at laſt move his hard-hearted Friends to ſome Compaſſion towards him; eſpecially, when they ſaw how near he was to his Grave, notwithſtanding all his Prayers to GOD *for Relief.*

Ver. 1. BUT *now* they that are *younger than I, have me in Deriſion, whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my Flock.*] But now, alas, there is ſo ſad an Alteration, that the Youths, who durſt not look me in the Face, have the Confidence, to mock and jear me; even thoſe Youths, whoſe Fathers were ſo mean, that I diſdained to imploy them in the vileſt Service.

Ver. 2. *Yea, whereto might the Strength of their Hands* profit *me, in whom old Age was perished?*] Men whom if I had had a Mind to imploy, were fit for nothing; being ſo lazy, liſtleſs, and unable to do any Buſineſs, that it was in vain to call them to it.

Ver. 3. *For Want and Famine* they were *ſolitary: fleeing into the Wilderneſs in former Time deſolate and waſte:*] Beggarly Fellows, who, being ready to ſtarve, were aſhamed to be ſeen; and ſneak'd into deſart Places to hide their Poverty: It is but Yeſterday that they were moſt wretchedly Miſerable;

Ver. 4. *Who cut up Mallows by the Buſhes, and Juniper-roots* for *their Meat.*] Satisfying their Hunger with thoſe unſavoury Herbs, which they cut up in the ſalt Marſhes; and having no other Bread but the Roots of Juniper-trees.

Ver. 5. *They were driven forth from among* Men, (*they cried after them, as* after *a Thief.*)] They were driven from the Society of Men; and if ever they appeared, an Out-cry was raiſed againſt them, as there is againſt a Thief when he is diſcovered.

Ver. 6. *To dwell in the Cliffs of the Vallies,* in *Caves of the Earth, and* in *the Rocks.*] They had no other Habitation, but the Clefts which the Brooks ſometimes make in the Vallies; or the Caves which they found in other Parts of the Earth, or in the Rocks.

Ver. 7. *Among the Buſhes they brayed, under the Nettles they were gathered together.*] Their Sighs might be heard, like the braying of Aſſes, among the Thorn-buſhes; they lurked together under Nettles or Thiſtles:

Ver. 8. They were *Children of Fools, yea, Children of baſe Men: They were viler than the Earth.*] Being lewd Villains, the Children of obſcure Parents; viler than the Earth upon which they trod.

Ver. 9. *And now am I their Song, yea, I am their By-word.*] And now am I become their Paſtime: They have made Songs of my Calamity; and it is the common Entertainment to diſcourſe of my Miſery.

Ver. 10. *They abhor me, they flee far from me, and ſpare not to ſpit in my Face.*] They expreſs an Abhorrence of me; and, as vile as they are, will not come near me; or if they do, it is only to ſhew their extream Contempt of me.

Ver. 11. *Becauſe he hath looſed my Cord, and afflicted me, they have alſo let looſe the Bridle before me.*] GOD, they ſee, hath ſcattered all my Eſtate, and by ſore Afflictions laid me very Low; which hath made them forget all Reſpect to me, and take an unreſtrained Licence in their inſolent Behaviour towards me.

Ver. 12. *Upon* my *right* Hand *riſe the Youth, they puſh away my Feet, and they raiſe up againſt me the Ways of their Deſtruction.*] They ſet up the very Boys to accuſe me; they puſh me down, and then trample on me: I am become the beaten Path, as I may call my ſelf, of their pernicious Reproaches.

Ver. 13. *They mar my Path, they ſet forward my Calamity, they* have *no Helper.*] They ſo diſturb my Thoughts, that I know not what Courſe to take in this miſerable Condition: which they heighten by their Calumnies; and are ſo fruitful in them, that they need none to help to invent them.

Ver. 14. *They came* upon me *as a wide breaking in* of Waters: *In the Deſolation they rolled themſelves* upon *me.*] They aſſault me with ſuch a Fury as Soldiers do their Enemies, when they have made a wide Breach in the Wall of a beſieged City, and pour in all their Forces to deſtroy them.

Ver. 15. *Terrours are turned upon me: They purſue my Soul as the Wind: And my Welfare paſſeth away as a Cloud.*] This diſmal Change hath fearfully aſtoniſhed me, to ſee all my Wiſhes and Hopes diſperſed like the Wind, and all the Happineſs I poſſeſſed paſſed away as ſwiftly as a Cloud.

Ver. 16. *And now my Soul is poured out upon me; the Days of Affliction have taken hold upon me.*] I can do nothing now but melt into Tears; my very Soul is ready to faint away with Grief; when I think how thoſe joyful Days are gone, and what Diſtreſſes have ſeized on me, and come to take their Place.

Ver. 17. *My Bones are pierced in me in the Night-ſeaſon: And my Sinews take no Reſt.*] In the Night (when Sleep is wont to bury our Grief) I feel ſuch ſharp Pains, as penetrate through my very Bones; my Blood boils ſo violently in my Veins, that I can take no Reſt.

Ver. 18. *By the great Force* of my Diſeaſe, *is my Garment changed: It bindeth me about as the Collar of my Coat.*] It requires a great deal of Strength, when I would ſhift my Cloaths, to pull them off: My outward Garment, by the filthy Matter of my Sores, being glewed as faſt to me, as the Collar of my Shirt.

Ver. 19. *He hath caſt me into the Mire, and I am become like Duſt and Aſhes.*] I look as if I had been thrown into the Dirt: there is little Difference between me and Duſt and Aſhes.

Ver. 20. *I cry unto thee, and thou doſt not hear me: I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me* not.] And, which is ſaddeſt of all, I call upon thee, O GOD, but cannot prevail with thee to relieve me: I continue praying and waiting for thy Help, and thou ſufficiently underſtandeſt my miſerable Caſe;

Ver. 21. *Thou art become cruel to me: With thy ſtrong Hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.*] But thy former Kindneſs to me is turned into ſuch Severity, that it looks like Cruelty: Thou haſt given me ſuch deadly Blows, as if thou hatedſt me.

Ver. 22. *Thou liſteſt me up to the Wind: Thou cauſeſt me to ride* upon it, *and diſſolveſt my Subſtance.*] Thou didſt liſt me up on High, and madeſt me, as it were, to ride upon the Clouds: but haſt thrown me down with ſo much the ſorer Fall, which hath broken me all in Pieces.

Ver. 23. *For I know* that *thou wilt bring me* to *Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all Living.*] So that I can think of nothing but dying, and going to my Grave; the common Sanctuary of all Mankind.

Ver. 24. *Howbeit he will not ſtretch out* his *Hand to the Grave, though they cry in his Deſtruction.*] Whither thy afflicting Hand will not pur-

purſue me: for though Men cry when they are ſent thither, yet when they are there, all their Sufferings and Complaints are ended.

Ver. 25. *Did not I weep for him that was in Trouble? was* not *my Soul grieved for the Poor?*] Strange that I ſhould be thus puniſhed without any Mercy! was I wont to be ſo unmerciful to others? No, I never look'd upon Men under any Hardſhip without Tears; and was ſo ſenſibly touched with the Miſeries of the Poor, that I ever relieved them.

Ver. 26. *When I looked for good, then evil came* unto me: *and when I waited for Light, there came Darkneſs.*] Which gave me good Hope that I ſhould be very happy: but inſtead thereof, the ſaddeſt Afflictions and Troubles are befaln me.

Ver. 27. *My Bowels boiled and reſted not: the Days of Affliction prevented me.*] Which have ſo ſuddenly ſurpriſed me, that they have put me into the greateſt Commotion and Diſorder: my Bowels boil without the leaſt Intermiſſion.

Ver. 28. *I went mourning without the Sun: I ſtood up,* and *I cried in the Congregation.*] My Affliction is ſo conſtant, without any Glimpſe of Joy, that I am a perpetual Mourner; and am not able to lie ſtill, nor to refrain from Shrieks and Cries in the greateſt Aſſemblies.

Ver. 29. *I am a Brother to Dragons, and a Companion to Owls.*] I can do nothing but lament my ſelf, as if I were one of thoſe mournful Creatures which make ſuch doleful Noiſes in deſart Places.

Ver. 30. *My Skin is black upon me, and my Bones are burnt with Heat.*] The boiling Heat of my Body hath ſo parched me, that my Skin looks black; and the Marrow in my Bones, and all my vital Moiſture, is dried up.

Ver. 31. *My Harp alſo is* turned *to Mourning, and my Organ into the Voice of them that weep.*] And, to ſay no more, all Mirth is baniſhed my Houſe, the muſical Inſtruments are laid aſide, and nothing but Mourning and Weeping come in their Room.

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

It was poſſible his Friends might make quite another Uſe than Job *intended of the relation he had made of his miſerable Condition, in the Chapter foregoing: and therefore, leſt it ſhould harden them in their old Errour, and they ſhould take what he had ſaid to be an Argument of his Guilt; He gives in this Chapter a large and particular Account of his Integrity, which in general he had ſo often aſſerted; laying his very Soul, and the moſt ſecret Inclinations of it open before them; together with the Actions of his whole Life, in his private Capacity, (for of his publick he had ſpoken before Chap. XXIX.) both in reſpect of his Neighbours, of all ſorts, and in reſpect of God. To whom he again moſt ſolemnly appeals, in the Concluſion of this Diſcourſe, that he did not boaſt of more Vertues than he had; but would moſt gladly be tried before him, by ſome impartial Judge. I need not here enumerate his Vertues, becauſe they are plainly and diſtinctly expreſſed in the Paraphraſe; and I do not pretend to give the intire Contents, but the Deſign only, of each Chapter.*

Ver. 1. I *Made a Covenant with mine Eyes; why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?*] But do not I beſeech you any longer look upon theſe Sufferings as an Argument that I am not innocent; for I proteſt to you, I have been very reſolute, and careful to avoid even the Occaſions of Laſciviouſneſs: And therefore how ſhould I ever ſo much as deliberate to corrupt a Virgin.

Ver. 2. *For what Portion of* God *is there from above? and* what *Inheritance of the Almighty from on high?*] For I know there is a God in Heaven; an Almighty Being, who rules over all: and what could I expect from him, as the Reward of ſuch Impurity?

Ver. 3. *Is not Deſtruction to the Wicked, and a ſtrange* Puniſhment *to the Workers of Iniquity?*] Doth it not lead to Deſtruction? Nay, do not ſtrange and horrible Puniſhments fall upon the Workers of that Iniquity?

Ver. 4. *Doth not he ſee my Ways, and count all my Steps?*] Is it poſſible to commit it ſo ſecretly, that it ſhall not be known by him, who obſerves every Motion, and tells every Step I take?

Ver. 5. *If I have walked with Vanity, or if my Foot hath haſted to Deceit;*] If I have broke my Promiſes, or have been forward to deceive and cheat my Neighbour;

Ver. 6. *Let me be weighed in an even Balance, that* God *may know mine Integrity.*] I refuſe not to be tried: but rather deſire my Actions may be ſcrupulouſly weighed and examined; for God, I am ſure, will approve of my upright Dealing.

Ver. 7. *If my Step hath turned out of the Way, and mine Heart walked after mine Eyes, and if any Blot hath cleaved to my Hands:*] If I have turned aſide from the Rules of Juſtice for Fear or Favour; if I have coveted the Goods of other Men, or my Hands have taken any Bribes:

Ver. 8. Then *let me ſow, and let another eat; yea, let my Off-ſpring be rooted out.*] Let me be ſerved in my Kind, and let other Men eat the Corn which I have ſowed, and pluck up the Trees (Roots and all) which I have planted.

Ver. 9. *If mine Heart have been deceived by a Woman, or if I have laid wait at my Neighbour's Door:*] If my Heart hath been ſeduced to filthy Deſires after another Man's Wife; if I have watched for his Abſence, or ſome fair Opportunity to enter into his Houſe, and defile his Bed;

Ver. 10. Then *let my Wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.*] Then let others take away my Wife from me, and make her the vileſt Slave, whom they may uſe at their Pleaſure.

Ver. 11. *For this* is *an heinous Crime, yea, it is an Iniquity* to be puniſhed *by the Judges.*] I ever thought this a Crime of the higheſt Nature, an Iniquity to be corrected by the Severity of the publick Juſtice.

Ver.

Ver. 12. *For it is a Fire that conſumeth to Deſtruction, and would root out all mine Increaſe.*] For it is a Fire, which, if it be not extinguiſhed, conſumes Men and their Eſtates, yea, deſtroys whole Families and Kingdoms; and ſo incenſes the divine Diſpleaſure, that, ſhould it eſcape the Magiſtrates Puniſhment, I could never hope that any Thing of mine (were I guilty of it) ſhould thrive, but all come to utter Ruine.

Ver. 13. *If I did deſpiſe the Cauſe of my Man-ſervant, or of my Maid-ſervant, when they contended with me:*] So far was I from doing ſuch foul Injuries to my Neighbours, that I never extended my Power to the Oppreſſion of my Slaves: But was content to wave the Privilege the Law gave me, of uſing them as I pleaſed; and to allow them a fair Hearing, when they had any Difference with me.

Ver. 14. *What then ſhall I do when* GOD *riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him?*] For I thought with my ſelf, that though Men could not puniſh me for my Rigor towards them, yet I ſhould never be able to excuſe it to GOD, when he came to judge me; nor tell what to anſwer, when he called me to an Account for my ill Uſage of them.

Ver. 15. *Did not he that made me in the Womb, make him? and did not one faſhion us in the Womb?*] I often alſo called to Mind that there was no ſuch a Difference in our Eſtates, as there was an Equality in our Births: And that we having one common Creator, my Slave was as nearly related to GOD as my ſelf.

Ver. 16. *If I have withheld the Poor from* their *Deſire, or have cauſed the Eyes of the Widow to fail:*] Nor have the Poor any Reaſon to complain of me: For if I ever denied to ſatisfy their Deſire, or let the Widow in vain expect my Relief;

Ver. 17. *Or have eaten my Morſel my ſelf alone, and the Fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof:*] Or have ſitten down at my Table alone, without the Company of fatherleſs Children:

Ver. 18. (*For from my Youth he was brought up with me, as* with *a Father, and I have guided her from my Mother's Womb.*)] (For whom I have always had a natural Compaſſion from my very Youth; I brought it into the World with me, and it hath been my Companion ever ſince:)

Ver. 19. *If I have ſeen any periſh for Want of Cloathing, or any Poor without Covering:*] If I have ſuffered any to periſh for Want of Cloathing, or let the Poor go naked without a Covering;

Ver. 20. *If his Loins have not bleſſed me, and if he were* not *warmed with the Fleece of my Sheep;*] If his Loins did not admoniſh him to bleſs me as oft as he girded on his Garment, and he were not kept warm with the Cloth made of my Wool:

Ver. 21. *If I have liſt up my Hand againſt the Fatherleſs, when I ſaw my Help in the Gate:*] If I ever have beaten the Fatherleſs, becauſe I knew I ſhould be too ſtrong for him in the Court, in Caſe he complained there of the Injuſtice;

Ver. 22. Then *let mine Arm fall from my Shoulder-blade, and mine Arm be broken from the Bone.*] Then let that guilty Arm fall off from my Shoulder, or be broken in two in the midſt.

Ver. 23. *For Deſtruction* from GOD *was a Terror to me, and by Reaſon of his Highneſs I could not endure.*] For I never thought I could eſcape the divine Vengeance; the Dread of which affrighted me, when Men could not, from all ſuch Inſolence; for I knew I could not ſupport my ſelf againſt his Majeſty:

Ver. 24. *If I have made Gold my Hope, or have ſaid to the fine Gold,* Thou art *my Confidence:*] Whoſe Favour I do not deſire, if I have put my Truſt in Riches, and thought my ſelf ſafe and ſecure becauſe I was furniſhed with the nobleſt Treaſures:

Ver. 25. *If I rejoiced becauſe my Wealth* was *great, and becauſe mine Hand had gotten much.*] Or if I was vainly elevated and puffed up with the large Poſſeſſions left me by my Anceſtors, or with the great Increaſe I had made to them by my own Induſtry.

Ver. 26. *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in Brightneſs:*] If when I beheld the Sun ariſe, or the Moon appear in her full Luſtre,

Ver. 27. *And my Heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my Mouth hath kiſſed my Hand:*] I ever entertained an Opinion in my Mind that they were Gods, or kiſſed my Hand in Token of Worſhip and Reverence to them:

Ver. 28. *This alſo* were *an Iniquity* to be puniſhed by *the Judge: for I ſhould have denied the* GOD that is *above.*] This alſo were a fearful Crime, which GOD's Vicegerents ſhould puniſh; becauſe it were to put thoſe Stars in the Place of him who is above all Heavens.

Ver. 29. *If I rejoiced at the Deſtruction of him that hated me, or liſt up my ſelf when Evil found him:*] Whom I do not wiſh to be my Friend, if I ever was glad at the Ruin of mine Enemy, or inſulted over him, when any Miſchief befel him:

Ver. 30. (*Neither have I ſuffered my Mouth to ſin, by wiſhing a Curſe to his Soul.*)] (No, I was not ſo much as guilty of making any Imprecations againſt him, nor was provoked by his Malice to wiſh him dead:)

Ver. 31. *If the Men of my Tabernacle ſaid not, Oh that we had of his Fleſh! we cannot be ſatisfied.*] Though the People of my Family were ſo enraged at him, that, if I would have yielded to their Paſſion, they were ready to eat him up with an inſatiable Anger.

Ver. 32. *The Stranger did not lodge in the Street:* but *I opened my Doors to the Traveller.*] Much leſs was I guilty of Unkindneſs to Strangers, whom I never ſuffered to lodge in the Streets: For the Door of my Houſe ſtood open, that any Traveller might turn in there, if he pleaſed.

Ver. 33. *If I covered my Tranſgreſſion as Adam, by hiding mine Iniquity in my Boſom.*] If I have ſtudied to ſeem better than I am, and have not now made a free Confeſſion; but, like our firſt Parent, have concealed or excuſed my Faults, and out of ſelf-love have hidden mine Iniquity.

Ver. 34. *Did I fear a great Multitude, or did the Contempt of Families terrifie me: that I kept Silence,* and *went not out of the Door?*] Becauſe I dread

dread what the People will ſay of me, or am terrified by the Contempt, into which the Knowledge of my Guilt may bring me with the neighbouring Families: then I am content my Mouth ſhould be ſtopt, and that I never ſtir out of my Door any more.

Ver. 35. *Oh that one would hear me! behold, my Deſire* is, that *the Almighty would anſwer me, and* that *mine Adverſary had written a Book.*] Oh that the Truth of all this might be examined by ſome equal Judge! Behold, I continue ſtill to deſire of GOD this Favour; and let him that can accuſe me, bring in his Libel in Writing againſt me.

Ver. 36. *Surely I would take it upon my Shoulder, and bind it as a Crown to me.*] Surely I would not endeavour to obſcure it, but openly expoſe it to be read by all; nay, wear it as a ſingular Ornament, which would turn to my Honour, when the World ſaw it diſproved.

Ver. 37. *I would declare unto him the Number of my Steps, as a Prince would I go near unto him.*] I my ſelf would aſſiſt him to draw up his Charge, by declaring to him freely every Action of my Life: I would approach him as undauntedly as a Prince, who is aſſured of the Goodneſs of his Cauſe.

Ver. 38. *If my Land cry againſt me, or that the Furrows likewiſe thereof complain:*] For if ſo much as a Bit of my Land was unjuſtly gotten, or I have defrauded thoſe who ploughed it of their Wages;

Ver. 39. *If I have eaten the Fruits thereof without Money, or have cauſed the Owners thereof to loſe their Life:*] If I have taken the Fruits of it from my Tenants, and paid nothing for them; or let them ſuch hard Bargains, that it broke their Heart:

Ver. 40. *Let Thiſtles grow inſtead of Wheat, and Cockle inſtead of Barley. The Words of Job are ended.*] Then let Corn never grow there any more; but let it be over-run with Thiſtles and the moſt ſtinking Weeds.

Here *Job* ended his Defence.

CHAP. XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

It appears by the 15th Verſe of this Chapter, that there were ſeveral other Perſons preſent beſides thoſe that are named, when this Diſpute was held between Job *and his three Friends. Among whom there was a young Man named* Elihu; *and who was either a* Syrian, *(in which Language this Book was firſt written, and tranſlated by* Moſes *into* Hebrew, *ſays the Author of the Commentaries under* Origen's *Name) deſcended from the ſecond Son of* Nahor, Abraham's *Brother, XXII.* Gen. 21. *or an* Idumæan, *of the ſame Country with* Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *XXV.* Jer. 23. *I have made him a* Syrian *in my Paraphraſe, becauſe he is ſaid to be of the Kindred of* Ram; *by whom we are to underſtand either* Aram, *or, as the* Hebrews *think,* Abraham, *by whom ſuch Wiſdom and Piety might be promoted in his Brother's Family, as is apparent in* Elihu; *who, tho' much inferiour to the reſt in Years, (for which Reaſon he had held his Peace thus long) yet was much ſuperiour to them in Knowledge. Which he diſcovers in the judicious Cenſures he here paſſes, not only upon the three Friends, but upon* Job *himſelf: whom he hath nothing to charge withal, relating to any Crime committed before this Affliction befel him; but thinks he had not managed the Diſpute about it with ſo much Calmneſs and Submiſſion to* GOD, *as became his Piety. In this he differs from thoſe that ſpake before him: For I do not find that he blames him for any Miſcarriages, but thoſe only which he obſerved in the Heat of his Diſputation, and he ſpends his Time rather in juſtifying* GOD, *than in carping at* Job, *as the other had done.*

Ver. 1. *So theſe three Men ceaſed to anſwer Job, becauſe he was righteous in his own Eyes.*] And his three Friends alſo left off diſputing with him, becauſe they ſaw him immoveably fix'd in the Opinion of his Innocence.

Ver. 2. *Then was kindled the Wrath of Elihu the Son of Barachel the Buzite, of the Kindred of Ram: againſt Job was his Wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather than* GOD.] Which very much diſpleaſed a young Man, who had ſtood by all this Time, and heard what both Sides ſaid for themſelves. His Name was *Elihu*, deſcended from a Brother of *Abraham*; who was exceeding angry with *Job*, becauſe he ſpent more Time in juſtifying himſelf, than in juſtifying GOD;

Ver. 3. *Alſo againſt his three Friends was his Wrath kindled, becauſe they had found no Anſwer, and* yet *had condemned Job.*] And with his three Friends alſo, becauſe they were not able to maintain their Charge againſt *Job*, and yet had condemned him to be a wicked Hypocrite.

Ver. 4. *Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken, becauſe they* were *elder than he.*] Yet he moderated his Paſſion ſo diſcreetly, that he ſaid not a Word, till he had waited, as well as *Job*, to ſee whether they would reſume the Debate: becauſe it was not fit, he thought, for him to meddle, as long as his Elders had any Thing to ſay.

Ver. 5. *When Elihu ſaw that* there was *no Anſwer in the Mouth of* theſe *three Men, then his Wrath was kindled.*] But when he ſaw that none of the three offered to reply, but ſat as Men that knew not what to ſay, he was not able to hold his Peace any longer:

Ver. 6. *And Elihu the Son of Barachel the Buzite, anſwered and ſaid, I* am *young, and ye* are *very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durſt not ſhew you mine Opinion.*] But in this Manner addreſſed himſelf unto them, ſaying, I have conſidered all this while mine own Youth, and your aged Experience; which have deterred me ſo much, that I have hitherto been afraid to interpoſe my Opinion.

Ver. 7. *I ſaid, Days ſhould ſpeak, and Multitude of Years ſhall teach Wiſdom.*] I thought with my ſelf, that it was becoming one of

my ſmall Standing, to hear, rather than to ſpeak; and to learn Wiſdom in ſuch grave Company as yours, rather than pretend to teach it.

Ver. 8. *But* there is *a Spirit in Man: and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them Underſtanding.*] But I ſee I was miſtaken: Man is a very wretched Thing, though he live never ſo long, if GOD do not illuminate him. It is the Divine Inſpiration which gives Underſtanding.

Ver. 9. *Great Men are not* always *wiſe: neither do the Aged underſtand Judgment.*] They are not always the wiſeſt who are in Authority, and the Teachers of others: nor do old Men always ſo well employ their Years, as to underſtand the Difference of Things.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I ſaid, Hearken to me, I alſo will ſhew mine Opinion.*] Therefore let me intreat you to lend your Ears a little to me: I alſo will tell you what I think about this Matter.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I waited for your Words; I gave ear to your Reaſons, whilſt you ſearched out what to ſay.*] Do not think me too forward; for I have with great Patience heard all your Diſcourſes, and obſerved your Arguments; and let you proceed till you have ſearched as far as you could into the Buſineſs:

Ver. 12. *Yea, I attended unto you: and behold,* there was *none of you that convinced Job,* or *that anſwered his Words.*] And having duly conſidered and comprehended every Word, I muſt needs pronounce, that there is none of you hath confuted *Job*, nor ſaid any Thing to the Purpoſe in Anſwer to his Defence of himſelf.

Ver. 13. *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, We have found out Wiſdom: GOD thruſteth him down, not Man.*] For it is not ſufficient for you to ſay he is obſtinate, and therefore it is wiſely done of us to leave him to GOD: He ſhall confound him, by continuing his Affliction; not we by our Arguments.

Ver. 14. *Now he hath not directed* his *Words againſt me: neither will I anſwer him with your Speeches.*] Which truly are ſo weak, that I ſhall make no Uſe of them: But as *Job* hath directed none of his Words againſt me, ſo I ſhall trouble him with none of your Replies.

Ver. 15. *They were amazed, they anſwered no more: they left off ſpeaking.*] See, I beſeech you all, you that hear us, how theſe Diſputants are amazed; how ſilent they are, as if their Speech had forſaken them.

Ver. 16. *When I had waited, (for they ſpake not, but ſtood ſtill,* and *anſwered no more.)* You are my Witneſſes, that I have waited for Satisfaction: but after long Expectation, they bring forth nothing; they are at a Stand, and furniſhed with no further Anſwer.

Ver. 17. I ſaid, *I will anſwer alſo my Part, I alſo will ſhew mine Opinion.*] Which made me reſolve within my ſelf, that I would have a Share in this Diſpute; and ſhew, as I have often told you, what my Opinion is concerning it.

Ver. 18. *For I am full of Matter, the Spirit within me conſtraineth me.*] And indeed it is high Time; for I am ſo full, by long thinking of what I have to ſay, that I am in Pain till I have uttered my Mind.

Ver. 19. *Behold, my Belly* is *as Wine* which *hath no Vent, it is ready to burſt like new Bottles.*] My Thoughts work within me, like new Wine in a Veſſel: and we are both alike in Danger to burſt, unleſs there be a Vent.

Ver. 20. *I will ſpeak, that I may be refreſhed: I will open my Lips, and anſwer.*] I muſt ſpeak therefore, if it be but to eaſe my ſelf: I will open my Lips, as they do ſuch Veſſels, and make an Anſwer, becauſe I cannot with Safety hold my Peace any longer.

Ver. 21. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any Man's Perſon, neither let me give flattering Titles unto Man.*] And, I beſeech you, let me ſpeak with all Freedom; with Regard only to the Cauſe, and not to the Perſon: and do not expect that I ſhould complement, and give to Man any glorious Titles.

Ver. 22. *For I know not to give flattering Titles,* in ſo doing *my Maker will ſoon take me away.*] For I do not underſtand that art of ſoothing Men into a great Opinion of themſelves: or if I did, I ſhould not venture to uſe it; leſt he that made me ſhould preſently ſtop my Mouth, for not dealing plainly.

CHAP. XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

Here Elihu *addreſſes his Speech to* Job *alone, (for he rejected all that the three Friends had ſaid, as ſufficiently confuted by* Job *in his Diſpute with them,) and tells him,* firſt, *that he was the Man who would now plead with him in* GOD's *Behalf, (as he had oft deſired,) and that he was no unequal Match for him. And* then *begins to reprehend thoſe Paſſages which he thought were blameable in* Job's *Speeches; particularly his inſiſting ſo much upon his Integrity: which, though true, ſhould not have been mentioned without due Acknowledgment, that the Sovereign of the World had done him no Wrong in thus afflicting him; and that it was not fit for him to queſtion the Wiſdom and Juſtice of* GOD's *Providence, becauſe he did not underſtand it. For the Care of* GOD *over Man, and his Kindneſs to him, he ſhews, is ſo apparent, upon ſo many Scores, that it ought not to be denied becauſe of the unaccountable Afflictions that may befal us; which we ought rather to think are one of the Ways whereby he doth Man good.*

Ver. 1. *Wherefore Job, I pray thee, hear my Speeches, and hearken to all my Words.*] And truly I think I need not uſe any farther Preface, to perſwade thee, O *Job*, to hear my Diſcourſe, and to give an attentive Ear to all I have to ſay.

Ver. 2. *Behold, now I have opened my Mouth, my Tongue hath ſpoken in my Mouth.*] Behold, now I begin; the Words are upon my Tongue, if thou art ready to receive them.

Ver. 3. *My Words* ſhall be *of the Uprightneſs of*

of my Heart: and my Lips shall utter Knowledge clearly.] And I assure thee they shall be the unfeigned Language of mine Heart, which it shall not be hard for thee to understand: For the Instructions they give thee shall be clearly and perspicuously delivered.

Ver. 4. *The Spirit of* GOD *hath made me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life.*] And first of all consider, that I am no other Creature than what thou art; a Man whom the Power of GOD hath formed, and then inspired with Life.

Ver. 5. *If thou canst answer me, set thy Words in Order before me, stand up.*] Thou needest not therefore decline the Encounter; but if thou art able to answer, set thy Forces in Order against me, and stand up to oppose me.

Ver. 6. *Behold, I am according to thy Wish in* GOD'S *Stead: I also am formed out of the Clay.*] Thou hast formerly desired (IX. 33. XIII. 3.) that some-body would appear in GOD'S Stead, to reason the Case with thee: Behold, thou hast thy Wish; I am the Man that appears for him, who am made of the same Matter with thy self.

Ver. 7. *Behold, my Terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my Hand be heavy upon thee.*] Look upon me, the Combate is not unequal, (as thou complainedst when thou lookedst upon GOD, IX. 34. XIII. 21.) thou seest no dreadful Majesty in me to affright thee, nor any Power to oppress thee.

Ver. 8. *Surely thou hast spoken in mine Hearing, and I have heard the Voice of* thy *Words, saying,*] I do not accuse thee neither, as thy three Friends have done, of Crimes uncertain or unknown, but of what I my self, with mine own Ears, have heard thee utter.

Ver. 9. *I am clean without Transgression, I am innocent; neither is there Iniquity in me.*] For surely thou hast said more than once, (X. 7. XIII. 23. XVI. 17, &c. XXXI.) I am pure and without any Fault, in my Heart and in my Actions, both towards GOD and towards Man.

Ver. 10. *Behold, he findeth Occasions against me, he counteth me for his Enemy.*] Behold, he who I thought would have vindicated my Innocence, seeks for Occasions to fall out with me, and for slight Matters declares himself mine Enemy.

Ver. 11. *He putteth my Feet in the Stocks, he marketh all my Paths.*] Whom he keeps so fast in Prison, that I cannot stir, and watches so narrowly, that I can find no Way to escape.

Ver. 12. *Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that* GOD *is greater than Man.*] This is thy complaining Language, and mark what I say to thee: Though I cannot accuse thee, as thy Friends have done, of other Sins, yet in this thou dost offend; and I must reprehend thee for it, by remembring thee, that there is no Comparison between GOD and Man.

Ver. 13. *Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not Account of any of his Matters.*] And therefore why dost thou presume to dispute with him, and call him to an Account for his Actions, who will not reveal to us all the Secrets of his Providence?

Ver. 14. *For* GOD *speaketh once, yea, twice, yet Man perceiveth it not.*] Not that GOD envies Knowledge to us, for he teaches Man more Ways than one, and a great deal more than he takes Care to learn.

Ver. 15. *In a Dream, in a Vision of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, in slumberings upon the Bed:*] One Way is by a Dream, (which you may call a Night-vision) when Men fall into a deep Sleep, or lie on their Beds between sleeping and waking:

Ver. 16. *Then he openeth the Ears of Men, and sealeth their Instruction,*] Then (when their Minds are free from the Business and Cares of the Day) he secretly whispers Instruction in their Ears, and imprints it upon their Minds,

Ver. 17. *That he may withdraw Man from his Purpose, and hide Pride from* [illegible].] Not to make them understand indeed all the secret Reasons of his Providence, but to turn Man from his evil Way, and to dispose him with all Humility to submit himself to his heavenly Instructer.

Ver. 18. *He keepeth back his Soul from the Pit, and his Life from perishing by the Sword.*] Who by this Means mercifully preserves him (if he obey his Admonition) from running on to his own Destruction, and rescues him from the violent Death which the Sword of Justice, or of an Enemy, would have inflicted on him.

Ver. 19. *He is chastened also with Pain upon his Bed, and the Multitude of his Bones with strong* Pain:] Another Way (and more common than this by Dreams) is the painful Diseases wherewith he chastises Man, and lays him low on his Bed, though his Constitution of Body be never so Firm and Strong.

Ver. 20. *So that his Life abhorreth Bread, and his Soul dainty Meat.*] In which languishing Case he loaths his Food; yea, nauseates that very Meat which formerly was his greatest Delight.

Ver. 21. *His Flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and his Bones* that *were not seen, stick out.*] Which makes so great a Change in him, that his Flesh, which formerly appeared plump and fair, cannot be seen; and his Bones stick out, which formerly did not appear.

Ver. 22. *Yea, his Soul draweth near unto the Grave, and his Life to the Destroyers.*] There is but a Step between him and his Grave; the Pangs of Death being ready to seize on him.

Ver. 23. *If there be a Messenger with him, an Interpreter, one among a Thousand, to shew unto Man his Uprightness:*] If then (which is a third Way whereby GOD teaches Men) there come a divine Messenger unto him, a rare Person that can expound the Mind of GOD, and perswade the sick Man to repent and amend his Life;

Ver. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the Pit, I have found a Ransom:*] He shall beseech GOD to be gracious to him, saying, Spare him, good LORD, and rescue him from going down to the Grave; let it satisfy thee that

thou

thou haſt corrected him, and that I have found him a Penitent.

Ver. 25. *His Fleſh ſhall be freſher than a Child's: he ſhall return to the Days of his Youth:*] Preſently the ſick Man ſhall begin to recover, and become a new Man in his Body, as well as in his Mind: His Fleſh ſhall look as freſh as when he was a Child; and he ſhall be reſtored to the Vigour and Strength of his youthful Age.

Ver. 26. *He ſhall pray unto* GOD, *and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his Face with Joy: for he will render unto Man his Righteouſneſs.*] His Prayer alſo ſhall be acceptable to GOD, and prevail for the Bleſſings he asks: He ſhall go into the Houſe of GOD, and with the moſt joyful Voice give Thanks unto him, and praiſe his Goodneſs; who will then acquit him, and reſtore this poor Man to his Favour.

Ver. 27. *He looketh upon Men, and* if any *ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted* that which was *Right, and it profited me not;*] And he (as becomes a true Penitent) caſting his Eyes upon his Neighbours, ſhall openly confeſs and ſay, I have offended GOD, and he hath juſtly chaſtiſed me; I have done wickedly, and he hath puniſhed me according to my Deſert:

Ver. 28. *He will deliver his Soul from going into the Pit, and his Life ſhall ſee the Light.*] But hath redeemed me from that Death into which I was going; and not only made me live, but given me Hope that I ſhall enjoy proſperous Days.

Ver. 29. *Lo, all theſe* things *worketh* GOD *oftentimes with Man.*] Behold in all this the wonderful Goodneſs of GOD; who by ſo many Means very often admoniſhes Man:

Ver. 30. *To bring back his Soul from the Pit, to be enlightned with the Light of the Living.*] To reduce him from thoſe evil Courſes which had juſt brought him to his Grave, and to raiſe him up again to live in all true Happineſs and Pleaſure.

Ver. 31. *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, hold thy Peace, and I will ſpeak.*] Mark this well, O *Job*, for it may very much concern thee: conſider what I have ſaid, and if thou pleaſeſt to hear me patiently, I will ſtill inſtruct thee more fully.

Ver. 32. *If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me: ſpeak, for I deſire to juſtifie thee.*] Or if thou haſt any thing to object to what I have ſaid, I am willing to hear it: Speak before I go any further; for I heartily deſire thou mayſt clear thy ſelf, and appear a righteous Perſon.

Ver. 33. *If not, hearken unto me: hold thy Peace, and I ſhall teach thee Wiſdom.*] If thou haſt no Exception againſt my Diſcourſe, then continue thy Attentions, and ſilently liſten to me, and I will teach thee more Wiſdom.

CHAP. XXXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Here Job *ſhews himſelf a far more humble and teachable Perſon than his three Friends; for, though* Elihu *had invited him to make what Exceptions he pleaſed to his Diſcourſe in the former Chapter, he would not open his Mouth, becauſe he plainly ſaw that* Elihu *had hit upon the Thing wherein he was defective. And ſo this young Man proceeds to carry the Charge a little higher, and tells him, with more Sharpneſs than before, that there were ſome Words in his Diſcourſes, which ſounded in his Ears, as if he accuſed* GOD's *Juſtice and Goodneſs. For what elſe did he mean when he complained that* GOD *did not do him right, and that he deſtroyed alike both good and bad? Which raſh Aſſertions he overthrows, from the Conſideration of the Sovereign Dominion, Power, Righteouſneſs, and Wiſdom of* GOD; *and repreſents to him what Behaviour and Diſcourſe would have better become him, than that which he had uſed.*

Ver. 1. FUrthermore *Elihu anſwered, and ſaid,*] To this laſt Motion *Job* conſented; and replying never a Word, *Elihu* proceeded in his Diſcourſe, and ſaid,

Ver. 2. *Hear my Words, O ye wiſe* Men, *and give Ear unto me, ye that have Knowledge.*] I do not deſire to be Judge alone in this Cauſe, but I appeal to them that are wiſe; and beſeech all thoſe (among you that hear me) who are intelligent, to mark and conſider what I now deliver.

Ver. 3. *For the Ear trieth Words, as the Mouth taſteth Meat.*] You can diſcern whether it be true or falſe; for the Mind is as proper a Judge of Diſcourſe, as the Palate is of Meat.

Ver. 4. *Let us chooſe to us Judgment: let us know among our ſelves what* is *good.*] Let us agree to examine the Buſineſs, that we may be able to pronounce a righteous Judgment: let us debate among our ſelves, and reſolve, whether *Job* have a good Cauſe or no.

Ver. 5. *For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous, and* GOD *hath taken away my Judgment.*] For he hath ſaid, I am innocent; and GOD (who knows I do not deſerve to ſuffer in this Manner, XXVII. 2, 6.) will not do me Right:

Ver. 6. *Should I lye againſt my Right? my Wound* is *incurable without Tranſgreſſion.*] I ſcorn to defend my ſelf with Lyes; but I muſt ſtill maintain, that this deadly Wound is given me for no Crime of mine.

Ver. 7. *What Man is like Job,* who *drinketh up Scorning like Water?*] Did you ever know ſuch a Man as *Job*, who, inſtead of adoring the Almighty, (as becomes his Wiſdom and Piety,) takes the Liberty to pour out Abundance of contemptuous Language concerning his Judgments?

Ver. 8. *Which goeth in Company with the Workers of Iniquity, and walketh with wicked Men.*] He aſſociates himſelf with Evil-doers; and talks after the ſame rate that the Wicked are wont to do.

Ver. 9. *For he hath ſaid, It profiteth a Man nothing that he ſhall delight himſelf with* GOD.] For he ſeems to me to be of this Opinion, that though a Man ſtudy to pleaſe GOD, he ſhall get nothing by it, IX. 22.

Ver. 10. *Therefore hearken unto me, ye Men of Underſtanding: far be it from* GOD, that he ſhould do *Wickedneſs, and* from *the Almighty*, that he ſhould commit *Iniquity.*] What think you of this, ye Men of Wiſdom? Do you not

abhor

abhor such a Thought as much as I, that he who is Almighty should wrong any Man, and he who is All-sufficient should swerve from the Rule of Righteousness?

Ver. 11. *For the Work of a Man shall he render unto him, and cause every Man to find according to his Ways.*] He will never be charged with such Weakness, but always deals with Men according as they deserve: For he that doth well, never fails to find a Reward; and he that doth ill, meets with a just Punishment.

Ver. 12. *Yea, surely* GOD *will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment.*] Surely I need not fear to affirm this with the greatest Confidence, that the Supreme Judge of the World will never condemn an innocent Person; nor will he that possesses all Things be corrupted to pronounce an unrighteous Sentence.

Ver. 13 *Who hath given him a Charge over the Earth? or who hath disposed the whole World?*] For he did not receive the Government of the World from any above himself; nor is there any higher Being, whose Authority he may be thought to dread, and for Fear of whom he may be tempted to do unjustly.

Ver. 14. *If he set his Heart upon Man,* if *he gather unto himself his Spirit and his Breath;*] No, he made and he sustains all Creatures; so that if he should contain his Goodness within himself, and recal that Spirit and Life which he hath infused into them;

Ver. 15. *All Flesh shall perish together, and Man shall turn again into Dust.*] Nothing could subsist one Moment: but all Mankind would expire together, and return unto their Dust.

Ver. 16. *If now* thou hast *Understanding, hear this: Hearken to the Voice of my Words.*] If thou art wise, mind what I say; and consider also what follows.

Ver. 17. *Shall even he that hateth Right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?*] Can he be an Enemy to justice himself, who binds us so fast to the Practice of it? and wilt thou condemn his Actions, who is most powerful, as well as just; and therefore need not serve himself by any wrongful Dealing?

Ver. 18. Is it fit *to say to a King,* Thou art *wicked,* and *to Princes,* Ye are *ungodly?*] There is no King on Earth but looks upon it as a great and unsufferable Reproach to be called a Tyrant: Nor will inferiour Rulers endure you should say, that they have no Regard to Equity.

Ver. 19. How much less to him *that accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more than the Poor? for they all* are *the Work of his Hands.*] Shall we impute then any such Thing to him, before whom a Prince or a rich Man is no more than the meanest and poorest Persons? who shall have the same Justice from him with the greatest, because they are all alike the Work of his Hands.

Ver. 20. *In a Moment shall they die, and the People shall be troubled at Midnight, and pass away: and the Mighty shall be taken away without Hand.*] How should he stand in Awe of the Power of Kings, or be bribed with the Gifts of the Rich, who can strike them all dead in a Moment? Whole Nations tremble before him, and in their deepest Security are destroyed. He needs not the Help of any Force on Earth to put down a mighty Tyrant; but invisible Powers carry him away.

Ver. 21. *For his Eyes* are *upon the Ways of Man, and he seeth all his Goings.*] For there is no one Passage of Man's Life, but he is acquainted with it: And therefore cannot be suspected, through Ignorance of their Actions (no more than through Fear of their Persons) to overlook their Crimes, or to do them any Injustice.

Ver. 22. There is *no Darkness, nor Shadow of Death, where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themselves.*] They may seek to hide their Wickedness, when they have committed it; and may make Excuses and subtle Pretences: But they cannot cast a Mist before his Eyes, who sees into the thickest Darkness, and the deepest Secrets.

Ver. 23. *For he will not lay upon Man more* than Right; *that he should enter into Judgment with* GOD.] And therefore, as he will never charge Man with that of which he is not guilty; so, when he calls him to an Account, he will not delay, nor put off his Judgment, to hear what Man can say for himself.

Ver. 24. *He shall break in Pieces mighty Men without Number, and set others in their Stead.*] For he needs not be informed how Matters stand; and therefore breaks in Pieces mighty Men, without Inquiry or Examination of Witnesses against them; and confers their Dignity upon others.

Ver. 25. *Therefore he knoweth their Works, and he overturneth* them *in the Night, so that they are destroyed.*] And by this means shews that he knows their Works; when he so suddenly overturns them, that they are crushed in Pieces.

Ver. 26. *He striketh them as wicked Men in the open Sight of others:*] He punishes them as Men that in his Eyes are apparently wicked; and therefore makes them publick Examples for the Terrour of their Neighbours;

Ver. 27. *Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his Ways.*] Because they would not follow his Counsels, nor regard any of his Commands:

Ver. 28. *So that they cause the Cry of the Poor to come unto him, and he heareth the Cry of the Afflicted:*] But went on in their Oppression of the Poor, till they cryed to Heaven for Vengeance upon them: And the Cry of such afflicted People GOD never fails to answer.

Ver. 29. *When he giveth Quietness, who then can make Trouble? and when he hideth* his *Face, who then can behold him? whether* it be done *against a Nation, or against a Man only.*] And if he will grant such poor Wretches Rest and Ease, who can disturb them? or if he be angry with their Oppressour, who can shew him Favour? (which is as true of whole Nations, as one single Person.)

Ver. 30. *That the Hypocrite reign not, lest the People be ensnared:*] He will not let the wicked Tyrant reign alway, though he pretend Piety and the publick Good never so much; lest the People should be ensnared into Sin by his Example.

Ver. 31. *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto* God, *I have born* Chaſtiſement, *I will not offend* any more.] Wherefore it is beſt for an afflicted Perſon not to complain, but to ſuſpect himſelf, (though he be never ſo good;) and preſently to ſay to God, I confeſs this Suffering is juſt; I will not offend by pleading my Innocence.

Ver. 32. That which *I ſee not, teach thou me: if I have done Iniquity, I will do no more.*] If I have overlooked any thing that I ſhould have obſerved, do thou ſhew it me: If I have committed any Fault, I will take Care to do ſo no more.

Ver. 33. Should it be *according to thy Mind? he will recompence it, whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chuſe, and not I: therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt.*] Haſt thou addreſſed thy ſelf to God in this Manner? Anſwer that Queſtion; for God will recompenſe it, if thou doſt deſpiſe ſuch good Counſel; which perhaps thou wilt chuſe to do, but ſo would not I. Speak therefore what thy Opinion is.

Ver. 34. *Let Men of Underſtanding tell me, and let a wiſe Man hearken unto me.*] Or let any underſtanding Perſon tell us what is their Opinion; for ſuch, as I ſaid before, would I have to judge between us.

Ver. 35. *Job hath ſpoken without Knowledge, and his Words* were *without Wiſdom.*] *Job* ſeems to me to be very much miſtaken; and his Diſcourſes to be inconſiderate and without Reaſon.

Ver. 36. *My Deſire* is, that *Job may be tried unto the End, becauſe of* his *Anſwers for wicked Men.*] And therefore I am ſo far from wiſhing he may be preſently releaſed from his Afflictions, that I take it to be more deſirable he ſhould be ſtill tried and proved by them, till he recant the Anſwers in which he hath complained of divine Providence, after the Manner of wicked Men.

Ver. 37. *For he addeth Rebellion unto his Sin, he clappeth his* Hands *amongſt us, and multiplieth his Words againſt* God.] For otherwiſe he will add greater Offences to thoſe leſſer he hath already committed: he will defend what he hath inconſiderately ſpoken; nay, triumph, as if he had gotten the better of us; and inſtead of making the Confeſſion to which I have exhorted him, continue to multiply his Complaints againſt God.

CHAP. XXXV.

ARGUMENT.

Job *ſtill keeps Silence, notwithſtanding that* Elihu *had made the harſheſt Conſtruction of his Words; becauſe he was ſenſible he meant him well, and had now, in the Concluſion of his Diſcourſe, given him very wholſome Counſel; and, allowing his Integrity, had only charg'd him with ſome unhappy Expreſſions, which had fallen from him when he was in great Anguiſh of Spirit. Which, I ſuppoſe, was the Reaſon he doth not contradict him, though he continue here in this Chapter to faſten the very ſame harſh Senſe upon his Words,* ver. 2, 3. *Which he refutes from the Conſideration of the infinite Diſproportion there is between Man and* God: *who is never the worſe indeed for any Evil, nor at all the better for any Good that we do; and yet hath ſuch a Love to Mankind, that it is certain He would not have them miſerable, but takes Care for their Relief when they are oppreſſed, if they addreſs themſelves, as they ought, to Him.*

Ver. 1. *ELIHU ſpake moreover, and ſaid,*] To this *Job* making no Anſwer, *Elihu* preſſed him again, and ſaid;

Ver. 2. *Thinkeſt thou this to be Right,* that *thou ſaidſt, My Righteouſneſs is more than* God's?] Let me appeal to thy own Conſcience: Doſt thou think this to be Right, that thou ſaidſt, God is not ſo righteous as I am?

Ver. 3. *For thou ſaidſt, What Advantage will it be unto thee?* and, *what Profit ſhall I have,* if I be cleanſed *from my Sin?*] What elſe could be thy Meaning, when thou utteredſt ſuch Words as theſe, What doth God care whether I be innocent or no? Or what Benefit ſhall I have by it if I be?

Ver. 4. *I will anſwer thee, and thy Companions with thee.*] I will anſwer thee, and ſuch as thou art, in a few Words.

Ver. 5. *Look unto the Heavens, and ſee, and behold the Clouds* which *are higher than thou.*] Caſt up thine Eyes to the Heavens, look upon the Clouds and the Sky, and conſider, that as high as they are, they are not ſo much above thee as God is above them.

Ver. 6. *If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? or* if *thy Tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?*] And therefore it is true, that he is never the worſe for the Sins which thou haſt committed, nor will be the worſe, though thou ſhould proceed to commit more and greater:

Ver. 7. *If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him? or what receiveth he of thine Hand?*] And that he is never the better for thy being righteous, which can confer nothing upon him which he hath not already, nor add any thing to his Greatneſs.

Ver. 8. *Thy Wickedneſs* may hurt *a Man as thou* art, *and thy Righteouſneſs* may profit *the Son of Man.*] But thou ſhouldſt not conclude from thence, that it is all one whether a Man be good or bad: For thy Wickedneſs will prove hurtful to thy ſelf, and to the reſt of Mankind; and thy Righteouſneſs will do thee and them great Service.

Ver. 9. *By Reaſon of the Multitude of Oppreſſions, they make* the oppreſſed *to cry: they cry out by Reaſon of the Arm of the mighty.*] The Cries of the Oppreſſed tell us what miſchief Injuſtice doth, and how miſerable it makes them: The Tyranny of the Mighty forces them to cry aloud to God for Vengeance; who, though he be not hurt himſelf by it, is touched with a Senſe of their Affliction.

Ver. 10. *But none ſaith, Where* is God *my Maker, who giveth Songs in the Night?*] The greateſt Miſchief is, that not one of theſe miſerable Wretches enquires ſeriouſly after God, who gave him his Being; and is able therefore, not only to relieve him, but to comfort, yea, to fill him with Joy in the midſt of the ſaddeſt Affliction.

Ver.

Ver. 11. *Who teacheth us more than the Beasts of the Earth, and maketh us wiser than the Fowls of Heaven.*] Having endued us with Reason and Wisdom to consider, that he, who takes care of the Beasts and the Birds, will not neglect us, if we do not merely cry and groan under our Oppressions, (as those brute Creatures do) but with hearty Repentance, and a thankful Sense of his Benefits, and humble Confidence in his Goodness, piously address our selves unto him.

Ver. 12. *There they cry (but none giveth Answer) because of the Pride of evil Men.*] This is the Reason that GOD doth not deliver them; because they lie crying indeed under their Affliction; but it is not a Sense of him, but only the haughty Violence of their Oppressors, which extorts it from them.

Ver. 13. *Surely* GOD *will not hear Vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.*] For we must not think that GOD (though he be inclined to relieve the afflicted) will give ear to Men so void of Piety: He will not regard those, who have so little Regard to him; even for this Reason, because he stands in Need of no Body.

Ver. 14. *Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him,* yet *Judgment* is *before him, therefore trust thou in him.*] Therefore, although thou complainest that thou dost not see him appear for thy Deliverance, (XXIII. 8.) yet do not conclude from thence that he is unrighteous; but go and condemn thy self before him, and then patiently wait for his Mercy.

Ver. 15. *But now because* it is *not* so, *he hath visited in his Anger, yet he knoweth* it *not in great Extremity:*] But now, because there is nothing of this in thee, GOD hath thus severely afflicted thee; and not at all regarded the exceeding great Prosperity wherein thou hast hitherto lived.

Ver. 16. *Therefore doth Job open his Mouth in vain: he multiplieth Words without Knowledge.*] And *Job* may spare his Complaints hereafter, for they are to no Purpose: he heapeth up Words without Reason.

CHAP. XXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

Having reprehended some of the unwarrantable Expressions in Job's *Discourses, (which he himself would not justify)* Elihu *comes closer to the Business, and speaks to the very Cause it self. Shewing, from the Nature of* GOD, *and the Methods of his Providence, that if* Job *had, instead of disputing, submitted himself humbly to* GOD's *Corrections, he would have delivered him: (it being as easie for him to lift up as to cast down) And that his not discerning the Reason of his Corrections, (which* Job *had made a great Cause of his Grief, XIX. 7.) ought not to have hindered his humble Submission; because we are not able to comprehend any of the Works of* GOD, *which we see every Day, and acknowledge to be most excellently contrived.*

Ver. 1. ELIHU *also proceeded, and said,*] *Job* still keeping Silence, *Elihu* proceeded in his Discourse, and said,

Ver. 2. *Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee, that* I have *yet to speak on* GOD's *Behalf:*] Be not weary, and I will open my Mind more fully; for thou hast not yet heard all that GOD hath to say for himself by my Mouth;

Ver. 3. *I will fetch my Knowledge from afar, and I will ascribe Righteousness to my Maker.*] Which shall now, from the most sublime Contemplations, assert the Righteousness of my Maker.

Ver. 4. *For truly my Words shall not be false: he that is perfect in Knowledge* is *with thee.*] For assure thy self I will not seek to baffle thee with sophistical Arguments: He that discourses with thee is none of those subtle Disputers, but loves sincere and solid Reason.

Ver. 5. *Behold,* GOD *is mighty, and despiseth not* any: he is *mighty in Strength* and *Wisdom.*] Know then, that GOD is most mighty, but despiseth not the meanest: The Excellence of his Power, and the Greatness of his Mind, will not suffer him to wrong any Body.

Ver. 6. *He preserveth not the Life of the Wicked: but giveth Right to the Poor.*] When Men are extreamly Wicked, and fit to be punished, he will let them live no longer; but the Poor at last shall recover their Right, and be delivered out of their Affliction.

Ver. 7. *He withdraweth not his Eyes from the righteous: but with Kings* are they *on the Throne, yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.*] For whatsoever Affliction the Righteous suffer, GOD never ceases to take a special Care of them; and sometimes raises them to the highest Offices that Kings can confer upon them: in which they are settled as long as they live, and exalted above the Power of their Enemies that would pull them down.

Ver. 8. *And if* they be *bound in Fetters,* and *be holden in Cords of Affliction:*] Or if they should fall into any Trouble, which lies as heavy on them, and holds them as fast, as if they were bound with Chains and with Cords;

Ver. 9. *Then he sheweth them their Work, and their Transgressions that they have exceeded.*] It is only to make them reflect upon their Lives, and to shew them their Sins; because they grow strong, and begin to prevail over them.

Ver. 10. *He openeth also their Ear to Discipline, and commandeth that they return from Iniquity.*] He disposeth them hereby to listen to Instruction, and admonishes them to forsake their Sins, and return to their Duty.

Ver. 11. *If they obey and serve* him, *they shall spend their Days in Prosperity, and their Years in Pleasures.*] And if they profit so much by their Affliction, as to obey this Counsel, and devoutly serve him, they shall regain their former Splendour; and pass the rest of their Life in Prosperity and Pleasure.

Ver. 12. *But if they obey not, they shall perish by the Sword, and they shall die without Knowledge.*] But if they be disobedient, they shall be utterly cut off, and die in their Folly.

Ver. 13. *But the Hypocrites in Heart heap up Wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.*] And they that are false-hearted, do but heap up Wrath

Wrath to themſelves by their counterfeit Piety: which ſurpriſes them ſo ſuddenly, that it gives them no Time ſo much as to cry to GOD, when his Puniſhments ſeize on them.

Ver. 14. *They die in Youth, and their Life* is *among the Unclean.*] They die before their Time, in the Flower of their Age; and periſh like the impure *Sodomites*, with an haſty and unexpected Deſtruction.

Ver. 15. *He delivereth the Poor in his Affliction, and openeth their Ears in Oppreſſion.*] Whereas he delivers the poor humble Man in his Affliction; and makes his Oppreſſion the means of giving him wholſome Counſel:

Ver. 16. *Even ſo would he have removed thee out of the ſtrait* into *a broad Place, where* there is *no Straitneſs, and that which ſhould be ſet on thy Table,* ſhould be *full of Fatneſs.*] Even ſo would he have reſcued thee (if thou hadſt humbly ſubmitted to his Correction) out of theſe miſerable Streights to which thou art reduced: and not only inlarged thee, but ſet thee ſo far from all Danger of falling again into them, that Peace and Plenty ſhould have been thy Portion.

Ver. 17. *But thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the Wicked: Judgment and Juſtice take hold* on thee.] But thou haſt maintained the Cauſe of the Wicked: And ſuch as a Man's Cauſe is, ſuch will the Judgment of GOD be upon him.

Ver. 18. *Becauſe* there is *Wrath*, beware *leſt he take thee away with his Stroke: Then a great Ranſom cannot deliver thee.*] And becauſe GOD is angry with thee, take heed leſt thou farther incenſe him to puniſh thee ſo heavily, that upon no Terms he will deliver thee.

Ver. 19. *Will he eſteem thy Riches?* no *not Gold, nor all the Forces of Strength.*] Doſt thou think he will have any Regard to thy Riches? No, not if thou hadſt all the Treaſure and all the Force which all the Power on Earth can muſter up.

Ver. 20. *Deſire not the Night, when People are cut off in their Place.*] Do not dream that they can do thee any Service; nor entertain thy ſelf with vain Hopes, as thou art muſing on thy Bed in the Night; when GOD ſometimes deſtroys whole Nations on a ſudden.

Ver. 21. *Take heed, regard not Iniquity: for this haſt thou choſen rather than Affliction.*] But let thy Sufferings teach thee Caution, and make thee afraid to go on to provoke offended Juſtice: for thou haſt done it too much already, in chuſing rather to accuſe divine Providence, than to ſubmit patiently to his Chaſtiſements.

Ver. 22. *Behold,* GOD *exalteth by his Power: who teacheth like him?*] Conſider the vaſt Extent of GOD's Power, which lifts Men up as well as caſts them down. What Lord is there ſo abſolute as he? or who ſhall teach him how to govern his Dominions?

Ver. 23. *Who hath enjoined him his Way? or who can ſay, Thou haſt wrought Iniquity?*] What Viſiter is there over him, to examine and take an Account of his Actions? or who may preſume to ſay, this or that is not well done?

Ver 24. *Remember that thou magnify his Work, which Men behold.*] See that thou leave off this carping at his Providence, and remember to extol and magnify it, as well as the wonderful Fabrick of the World, which Men behold with Admiration and Praiſe.

Ver. 25. *Every Man may ſee it, Man may behold* it *afar off.*] All Mankind contemplate it with Aſtoniſhment: There are none ſo dull, but in the fartheſt Parts of the Earth they behold, if they open their Eyes, the Majeſty of GOD;

Ver. 26. *Behold,* GOD is *great, and we know* him *not, neither can the Number of his Years be ſearched out.*] And muſt confeſs that he is great in Wiſdom and Power, and cannot be comprehended by our ſhallow Underſtandings; which are preſently confounded, when they enter into the Search of his eternal Being.

Ver. 27. *For he maketh the ſmall Drops of Water: They pour down Rain according to the Vapour thereof:*] For it is he who diſſolves the Clouds into Water, and doth not pour it down all at once; but by ſmall Drops ſweetly reſtores to the Earth the Vapour which was exhaled from thence:

Ver. 28. *Which the Clouds do drop,* and *diſtil upon a Man abundantly.*] For he hath made the Clouds to be fluid Bodies; which diſtil their Showers in ſo many Places, that there are Multitudes of Spectators and Admirers of this wonderful Contrivance.

Ver. 29. *Alſo can* any *underſtand the Spreadings of the Clouds,* or *the Noiſe of his Tabernacle?*] And can any one underſtand how he ſpreads thoſe Clouds, and makes them hang in the Air, when they are full of Water? or give an Account of the dreadful Sounds, which are heard from thence, and which tell us that he dwells in thoſe celeſtial Places?

Ver. 30. *Behold, he ſpreadeth his Light upon it, and covereth the Bottom of the Sea.*] Obſerve alſo how he ſpreads the Beams of the Sun upon the Sea, and covers it all over with Light; which raiſes new Vapours and Clouds in the Room of thoſe which are exhauſted.

Ver. 31. *For by them judgeth he the People, he giveth Meat in Abundance.*] Which he uſes for quite contrary Ends; both to puniſh Mankind by Storms and Tempeſts and Floods, and to make a plentiful Proviſion for them by fruitful Showers.

Ver. 32. *With Clouds he covereth the Light; and commandeth it* not to ſhine *by* the Cloud *that cometh betwixt.*] By thoſe Clouds alſo he ſometimes quite hideth the Sun from us, that it cannot ripen the Fruits; and ſometimes only intercepts its Beams a while, that it may not burn them up by immoderate Heat.

Ver. 33. *The Noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it, the Cattle alſo concerning the Vapour.*] The very Cattle perceive the Cloud as ſoon as it riſes, and declare what GOD intends to do with it; whether to turn it into Storms and Tempeſts, or into fruitful Rain and Showers.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

ARGUMENT.

Elihu *continues his Speech, which he had begun before, concerning the incomprehensible Works of* GOD: *and limits himself chiefly, as he had in the foregoing Chapter, to the Wonders* GOD *doth in the Clouds. To which, at last, he subjoyns the amazing Extent, Brightness, and Firmness of the Sky; in which the Sun shines with a Lustre, which we are not able to behold. And thence concludes, that the Splendour of the Divine Majesty is infinitely more dazling, and that we must not pretend to give an Account of his Counsels.*

Ver. 1. *AT this also my Heart trembleth, and is moved out of his Place.*] These are a few of the Works of GOD; and though there be innumerable more, yet this one single Effect of his Power strikes Terrour into me, and makes my Heart tremble, as if it would leap out of my Body, and leave me dead.

Ver. 2. *Hear attentively the Noise of his Voice, and the Sound* that *goeth out of his Mouth.*] Hearken, I beseech you, seriously to the horrible Noise, which comes out of some of those Clouds; and it will astonish you also. The smallest Murmurs of it are so dreadful, that it may be fitly stiled the Voice of GOD, calling Men to stand in Awe of him.

Ver. 3. *He directeth it under the whole Heaven, and his Lightning unto the Ends of the Earth.*] It is heard far and near, for he darts it through the whole Region of the Air; accompanied with his Flashes of Lightning, which shoot to the Ends of the Earth.

Ver. 4. *After it a Voice roareth: he thundereth with the Voice of his Excellency, and he will not stay them when his Voice is heard.*] After them follow the Claps of Thunder, more terrible than the Roarings of a Lion: which grow louder and louder, till they conclude in a violent Rain, or Hail, or Tempest.

Ver. 5. GOD *thundereth marvellously with his Voice; great Things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.*] And he who thunders thus with his most wonderful Voice, doth other great Things, which the Wit of Man cannot comprehend.

Ver. 6. *For he saith to the Snow, Be thou on the Earth; likewise to the small Rain, and to the great Rain, of his Strength.*] For in those Clouds, which I have so often mentioned, he makes the Snow, and commands it to cover the Earth; and on a sudden they turn into Rain, which sometimes falls in gentle Showers, and sometimes in impetuous Spouts of Water.

Ver. 7. *He sealeth up the Hand of every Man; that all Men may know his Work.*] Which stop the Labour of all those whose Business is in the Fields; and makes the Husbandmen know that he disposeth of it as he pleases.

Ver. 8. *Then the Beasts go into Dens, and remain in their Places.*] The very Beasts also are driven at that Season into their Lurking-Places, and are forced to stay in their Dens.

Ver. 9. *Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind: and Cold out of the North.*] From one Quarter of the Heavens blow turbulent Winds; and from the opposite Quarter those cold Blasts which clear and purifie the Air again.

Ver. 10. *By the Breath of* GOD, *Frost is given: and the Breadth of the Waters is straightned.*] By the like sharp Blasts GOD sends the Frost; and binds up the Waters so fast, that they cannot flow.

Ver. 11. *Also by Waterings he wearieth the thick Cloud: he scattereth his bright Cloud.*] In serene Evenings also he presses the Cloud into Drops of Dew upon the Earth; or the dewy Cloud receiving the Sun-Beams, by a dispersed and various Light, makes the beautiful Rainbow in the Heavens.

Ver. 12. *And it is turned round about by his Counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the Face of the World in the Earth.*] For it is turned about and whirled several Ways, according to the Orders of his wise Counsel; and so are all the rest that I have mentioned, which execute his Commands upon the Face of the whole Earth.

Ver. 13. *He causeth it to come, whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy.*] Being sent either to bring a Dearth, and to scourge our Sins with Plagues and Pestilential Diseases; or to produce the wanted Crop of the Earth, for the necessary Sustenance of Man and Beast; or to reward our Obedience with extraordinary Plenty, and very healthful Seasons.

Ver. 14. *Hearken unto me, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous Works of* GOD.] Listen diligently to these Things, O *Job*; do not dispute any more with GOD, but silently consider these his wonderful Works.

Ver. 15. *Dost thou know when* GOD *disposed them, and caused the Light of his Cloud to shine?*] Canst thou tell beforehand what Orders GOD will give about them? Art thou able to tell so much as when a Rainbow will appear in the Clouds?

Ver. 16. *Dost thou know the balancings of the Clouds, the wondrous Works of him which is perfect in Knowledge?*] What canst thou tell us then of the hanging of the Clouds in the Air, as in an equal Balance, and such like stupendous Works of his most absolute Wisdom?

Ver. 17. *How thy Garments* are *warm, when he quieteth the Earth by the South*-Wind?] Whence comes the violent Heat which we sometimes feel? or how do Calms come out of the same Quarter from whence come Whirlwinds? ver. 9.

Ver. 18. *Hast thou with him spread out the Sky,* which is *strong,* and *as a molten Looking-Glass?*] Lift up thy Thoughts still higher, and tell us, didst thou join with him, when he stretched out the Sky; in which, as in a Mirror, we behold the admirable Power and Wisdom of him, who, though it be so wide and vast, made it as firm as it is clear and bright?

Ver. 19. *Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order* our Speech *by Reason of Darkness.*] Teach us (if thou art so well skill'd) what we shall say to him of his Power and Wisdom; for we must confess our Ignorance

is so great, that our Thoughts are confounded when we attempt it.

Ver. 20. *Shall it be told him that I speak? if a Man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.*] Is any thing that I have said of him worth his Hearing? Whoever he be that goes about to describe him, shall lose himself, and be dazled with the Brightness of his Glory.

Ver. 21. *And now Men see not the bright Light which is in the Clouds: but the Wind passeth, and cleanseth them.*] For alas! Men are not able to look upon the Brightness of the Sun when it shines in the Heavens, after a Wind hath swept and cleansed them.

Ver. 22. *Fair Weather cometh out of the North: with* GOD *is terrible Majesty.*] And brought pure and serene Weather out of the Northern Parts: How then shall they look upon GOD, whose Majesty is most dreadful, and therefore not to be pried into with Curiosity, but worshipped and praised with the humblest Reverence?

Ver. 23. Touching *the Almighty, we cannot find him out:* he is *excellent in Power, and in Judgment, and in Plenty of Justice: he will not afflict.*] For when we have done all we can, we must acknowledge, that the Almighty cannot be comprehended by our Understanding: His Power is so excellent, his Judgment so exact, his Justice so abundant, that he ought not be questioned by us for what he doth; but if he be, he will not give an Account of his Actions.

Ver. 24. *Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any* that are *wise of Heart.*] Which should make all Men stand in Awe of him, and lowly adore, rather than boldly dispute with him: For he despiseth all those who are so wise in their own Conceit.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

What Elihu *had said concerning the Divine Majesty, in the 22d Verse of the foregoing,* GOD *declares to be true, by a sensible Demonstration, as I have expressed it in the first Verse of this Chapter. In which* GOD *himself appears as a Judge (according to* Job's *repeated Desires) to decide this great Controversy. And taking up the Argument begun by* Elihu, *(who came neareſt to the Truth) and prosecuting it in unimitable Words, (excelling his and all other Mens in the Loftiness of the Stile, as much as Thunder doth a Whisper) He convinces* Job *of his Ignorance and Weakness, by shewing him how little he understood of the most obvious Things in this World. Intending from thence, at last, to infer, that he who found himself puzzled, when he went about to give an Account of the meanest of* GOD's *visible Works, should not presume to penetrate into his secret Counsels, nor question his Goodness, no more than he could his Wisdom and Power, though he knew not why he was afflicted. One Instance had been sufficient to bring* Job *to a Nonplus; but he heaps up Abundance, to humble him the more when he saw how much Cause there was for it: whether he considered the Earth, or the Heavens, the Sea, or the Sun, Things contained in the Bosom of the Sea, or in the Bowels of the Earth, especially all the Meteors, (as we call them) which are formed in the Clouds, and the Constellations in the higher Regions; together with the Beasts upon the Earth, and the Birds which fly in the Air; one of each of which he mentions in the End of this Chapter.*

Ver. 1. *THEN the* LORD *answered Job out of the Whirlwind, and said,*] No sooner had *Elihu* spoken these Words, but there was a sensible Token of the Presence of that most dreadful Majesty of GOD (XXXVII. 22.) among them. For there arose an unusual Cloud, (after the Manner of GOD's appearing in those Days) and a Voice came out of it, as loud as a Tempest, which called to *Job*, saying,

Ver. 2. *Who is this that darkeneth Counsel by Words without Knowledge?*] Who is this that disparages my Counsels, with his ignorant Discourses about them?

Ver. 3. *Gird up now thy Loins like a Man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*] If thou hast the Courage to argue the Case with me, (as thou hast often desired) make thy self ready for the Debate, and answer me the Questions I shall ask thee.

Ver. 4. *Where wast thou when I laid the Foundations of the Earth? declare if thou hast Understanding.*] Where wast thou, when I founded the Earth? Speak, Man, and relate how I went about that Work, if thou art so skilful as thou pretendest.

Ver. 5. *Who hath laid the Measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the Line upon it?*] How came it to have these Dimensions? (For thou, sure, who presumest to censure my Providence, canst not be ignorant of such Matters.) After what Manner was the Line and the Rule applied, to give it these exact Proportions?

Ver. 6. *Whereupon are the Foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the Corner-stone thereof?*] Canst thou tell how it was fixt and settled upon its Centre, or what it is that holds all the Parts of it so firmly together?

Ver. 7. *When the Morning-Stars sung together, and all the Sons of* GOD *shouted for Joy.*] Where wast thou when the bright Stars first appeared to proclaim my Praise with one Consent; and all the Angelical Powers expressed their Joy, but did not assist at the Birth of the World?

Ver. 8. *Or who shut up the Sea with Doors, when it brake forth* as if *it had issued out of the Womb?*] What Midwife had the Sea to bring it forth, when it burst out of the confused Abyss, like an Infant out of the Womb?

Ver. 9. *When I made the Cloud the Garment thereof, and thick Darkness a swadling-band for it,*] And I covered it with Clouds as with a Garment, and wrapt its boisterous Waves in a thick Mist, with as much Ease as a Nurse swaddles a new-born Child;

Ver. 10. *And brake up for it my decreed* Place, *and set Bars and Doors,*] And laid it in that

that Bed, which I had appointed to be broken up for it in the Earth? Where though it be tossed to and fro, as an Infant in a Cradle; yet it keeps within its Shores, which cannot be overcorned.

Ver. 11. *And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: And here shall thy proud Waves be stayed.*] For I have fixed its Bounds, and resolved, thus far shalt thou flow, but no farther: These Sands and these Cliffs shall stop thy swelling Waves, be they lifted up never so tempestuously.

Ver. 12. *Hast thou commanded the Morning since thy Days, and caused the Day-spring to know his Place,*] Raise up thy Thoughts still higher, and tell me, dost thou remember since the Morning-light was made? Or was it thou who ordered the Sun, in what Part of the Heaven it should every Day arise?

Ver. 13. *That it might take hold of the Ends of the Earth, that the Wicked might be shaken out of it?*] And spread its Beams to the Ends of the Earth; that the Wicked, who delight in Works of Darkness, may be detected and dragg'd to their deserved Punishment?

Ver. 14. *It is turned as Clay to the Seal, and they stand as a Garment.*] For they are daunted at its Approach, and change Colour as oft as the Clay doth its form under different Seals; they are no more consistent with themselves than a changeable Garment:

Ver. 15. *And from the Wicked their Light is with-holden, and the high Arm shall be broken.*] And at last lose the Use of that Light, which innocent Persons enjoy with so much Pleasure; their insolent Power, which in the Night was so audacious, being broken in Pieces in the Morning.

Ver. 16. *Hast thou entred into the Springs of the Sea? or hast thou walked in the Search of the Depth?*] O thou who adventurest to enter into the Abyss of my Judgments, didst thou ever penetrate into the Spring of the Sea? or hast thou perfectly discovered all that lies at the Bottom of that great Deep?

Ver. 17. *Have the Gates of Death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the Doors of the Shadow of Death?*] Hath the Earth opened all her dark Caverns to thee? or hast thou gone down to the very Center of it?

Ver. 18. *Hast thou perceived the Breadth of the Earth? declare, if thou knowest it all.*] Nay, dost thou so much as understand all that grows upon the Surface of the Earth? shew thy Skill, if it be so comprehensive.

Ver. 19. *Where* is *the Way* where *Light dwelleth*? *and* as for *Darkness, where* is *the Place thereof,*] Tell me, which is the Way that leads to the Place where Light takes up its Dwelling when the Sun goes down? Or what becomes of the Darkness when the Sun rises again?

Ver. 20. *That thou shouldest take it to the Bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the Paths to the House thereof?*] Art thou able to go, and bring either of them hither? or to carry them back again away from hence, and prescribe them their Limits at thy Pleasure?

Ver. 21. *Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born; or* because *the Number of thy Days is great?*] Art thou acquainted with these Things, because thou wast then born when I made them? How comest thou to discourse so confidently of my Government of Mankind, who consist neither tell that thou shouldst be born, nor art able now to say when thou shalt die?

Ver. 22. *Hast thou entred into the Treasures of the Snow? or hast thou seen the Treasure of the Hail,*] And when wast thou in the Clouds, to see how the Snow or the Hail is made in such Abundance;

Ver. 23. *Which I have reserved against the Time of Trouble, against the Day of Battel and War?*] That I need no other Weapon than those, if I please to use them, for the Destruction of mine Enemies?

Ver. 24. *By what Way is the Light parted,* which *scattereth the East-wind upon the Earth?*] Art thou able to give an Account how the Light diffuses it self all over in an Instant? Or what makes the East-wind blow so violently upon the Earth?

Ver. 25. *Who hath divided a Water-course for the overflowing of Waters? Or a Way for the lightning of Thunder,*] Didst thou make a Chanel in Heaven for the Conveyance of overflowing Showers? Or open the Way for the breaking out of Lightning and Thunder?

Ver. 26. *To cause it to rain on the Earth* where *no Man* is: On *the Wilderness, wherein* there is *no Man*?] Is it by thy Direction that these Showers go, and fall upon the desart Places; where there are no Inhabitants to imploy their Art to provide them with Water?

Ver. 27. *To satisfie the desolate and waste* Ground, *and to cause the Bud of the tender Herb to spring forth?*] And that they satisfie the dry and barren Parts of the Earth, where all the Labour of Man is unprofitable, without such plentiful Rains to make them fruitful?

Ver. 28. *Hath the Rain a Father? Or who hath begotten the Drops of the Dew?*] What's more common than the Rain and the Dew? but who is able to produce one Drop of either?

Ver. 29. *Out of whose Womb came the Ice? and the hoary Frost of Heaven, who hath gendred it?*] In whose Womb was the Ice formed? Or who can make so small a Thing as the hoary Frost?

Ver. 30. *The Waters are hid as* with *a Stone, and the Face of the Deep is frozen.*] Whence comes the Cold that turns the Waters into Stone, and fetters the raging Waves of the Sea?

Ver. 31. *Canst thou bind the sweet Influence of Pleiades? or loose the Bands of Orion?*] Canst thou forbid the sweet Flowers to come forth, when the seven Stars arise in the Spring? Or open the Earth for the Husbandman's Labour, when the Winter Season, at the rising of *Orion*, ties up their Hands?

Ver. 32. *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his Season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his Sons?*] Is it by thy Power that the rest of the Stars, great and small, appear in the Southern

Southern and the Northern Signs, in their proper Seasons?

Ver. 33. *Knowest thou the Ordinance of Heaven? canst thou set the Dominion thereof on the Earth?*] Dost thou understand the Orders and the Laws, which I have established among the Heavenly Bodies? or couldst thou tell what to do, if it were referred to thee here on Earth, to settle the Government of them?

Ver. 34. *Canst thou lift up thy Voice to the Clouds, that Abundance of Waters may cover thee?*] Let me see an Instance of thy Power and Skill; lift up thy Voice to the Clouds, and command them to pour out Abundance of Waters upon the Place where thou now art.

Ver. 35. *Canst thou send Lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we* are?] Or call to the Lightnings, and bid them go whither thou hast a Mind to send them? and let me hear them answer, Behold, we are ready to obey thee.

Ver. 36. *Who hath put Wisdom in the inward Parts? or who hath given Understanding to the Heart?*] Didst thou give thy self Understanding? How comes it then to be so small, that thou canst not tell how a Thought is made?

Ver. 37. *Who can number the Clouds in Wisdom? or who can stay the Bottles of Heaven?*] Nor with all the Wisdom thou hast, so much as count the Num[illegible] of the Clouds, whose Showers thou art as unable to stop, as to make them run:

Ver. 38. *When the Dust groweth into Hardness, and the Clods cleave fast together?*] Though they have lain so long, that the Earth is abundantly satisfied, and fit for the Plough, or for the Seed.

Ver. 39. *Wilt thou hunt the Prey for the Lion? or fill the Appetite of the young Lions,*] Or dost thou pretend to have great Power upon Earth, though none in Heaven? wilt thou undertake then to provide Food for a Lion and all his Whelps,

Ver. 40. *When they couch in* their *Den, and abide in the Covert to lie in Wait?*] And that in a Desart; where they lie lurking in their Dens, and greedily watch for a Prey, in close and shady Places?

Ver. 41. *Who provideth for the Raven his Food? when his young ones cry unto* GOD, *they wander for lack of Meat.*] Or, which is less, wilt thou take upon thee to feed the young Ravens? who, expelled by the old Ones out of their Nest, complain to me of their Cruelty, but know not where to get a Bit of Meat.

CHAP. XXXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter continues the Discourse begun in the latter End of the foregoing, concerning GOD's *Providence about Beasts and Birds. And to the* Two *before mentioned, he adds* Seven *more. First, the* wild Goat, *or* Hind, *whose hard Labour among the Rocks,* GOD *is wont to help and promote (as the Psalmist observes* XXIX. 9. *and other Authors agree) by a Clap of Thunder; the Terrour of which puts her into such an Agony, that she presently excludes her young one, which sticks in the Birth. Then he mentions the* wild Ass; *and after that a tall Creature in those Countries called* Reem: *which we render an* Unicorn; *but* Bochartus *hath proved to be a* two-horned Goat *in* Arabia *of great Strength, with an erected Head and Ears. Of the rest I need say nothing here, they are so well known.*

Ver. 1. *KNowest thou the Time when the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the Hinds do calve?*] Vain Man, who wouldst so fain pry into my Secrets! didst thou ever climb the Rocks to see the wild Goats bring forth? or hast thou assisted at the hard Labour of the Hinds, and help'd to ease them of their Burthen?

Ver. 2. *Canst thou number the Months* that *they fulfil? or knowest thou the Time when they bring forth?*] Dost thou know the Moment of their Conception? or keepest an Account when they will be delivered?

Ver. 3. *They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their Sorrows.*] Hast thou seen how they bow themselves; with what Pain they bring forth, and with how much Difficulty they are freed from their Sorrow.

Ver. 4. *Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with Corn: they go forth, and return not unto them.*] And yet their young ones are lusty and strong; they grow up in the open Fields; they leave their Mothers, and return to them no more.

Ver. 5. *Who hath sent out the wild Ass free? or who hath loosed the Bands of the wild Ass?*] Was it thou that gave the wild Ass his Liberty, and made him so free from their Servitude, in which you keep no other Creatures?

Ver. 6. *Whose House I have made the Wilderness, and the barren Land his Dwellings.*] Who but I made that Difference between him and them; and laying no Burthen on them, assigned them the Wilderness, and barren Countries for his Habitation?

Ver. 7. *He scorneth the Multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the Crying of the Driver.*] Where he laughs at those that live in the Tumult and Bustle of Cities; and hears none of the Cries of him that drives other Asses to their Labour:

Ver. 8. *The Range of the Mountains* is *his Pasture, and he searches after every green Thing.*] Nor is confined in small Inclosures, but hath whole Mountains to range in for his Pasture; where he finds sufficient Food to appease his Hunger.

Ver. 9. *Will the Unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy Crib?*] Go to the Unicorn, (thou who wouldst have all Things conformable to thy Will,) and see if thou canst perswade him to serve thee: will he be content to be tied to thy Crib all Night?

Ver. 10. *Canst thou bind the Unicorn with his Band in the Furrow? or will he harrow the Valleys after thee?*] Or submit his proud Neck to thy Yoke all Day? canst thou make him go to Plough? or will he draw the Harrow over thy Land?

Ver.

Ver. 11. *Wilt thou truſt him, becauſe his Strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy Labour to him?*] Wilt thou rely upon him (becauſe his Strength is great) to do all the reſt of thy Work in the Field?

Ver. 12. *Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy Seed, and gather it into thy Barn?*] Or leave thy Harveſt out of Doors, till thou haſt prevail'd with him to bring it Home, and lay it in thy Barn?

Ver. 13. Gaveſt thou *the goodly Wings unto the Peacocks? or Wings and Feathers unto the Oſtrich?*] Have other Birds any Reaſon to complain that they are not ſo goodly as the Oſtrich; whoſe Wing is triumphant, if it be compared with the Wing and the Feather of the Stork.

Ver. 14. *Which leaveth her Eggs in the Earth, and warmeth them in the Duſt;*] But her inward Qualities are not ſo beautiful as her Plumes: For ſhe doth not ſeek for ſolitary Places wherein to lay her Eggs; but drops them any where upon the Ground, and negligently leaves them to be corrupted by the Heat of the Sand and of the Sun.

Ver. 15. *And forgetteth that the Foot may cruſh them, or that the wild Beaſt may break them.*] She doth not ſecure them from the Foot of Travellers, or of wild Beaſts; who frequently tread upon them, and cruſh them in Pieces:

Ver. 16. *She is hardened againſt her young ones, as though they were not hers: her Labour is in vain without Fear;*] But is hardened againſt the Fruit of her own Womb, as if it were not hers; and ſo ſhe loſes all her Labour, becauſe ſhe hath no Fear it may be loſt.

Ver. 17. *Becauſe* GOD *hath deprived her of Wiſdom; neither hath he imparted to her Underſtanding.*] For GOD hath not given her that Wiſdom which he hath beſtowed upon other Creatures; but made her of a ſtupid and careleſs Nature:

Ver. 18. *What Time ſhe lifteth up her ſelf on high, ſhe ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider.*] Tho' he hath imparted ſo much as is neceſſary for her Preſervation: For when ſhe raiſes her ſelf, and lifts up her Wings, ſhe runs ſo faſt, that ſhe deſpiſes a Man on Horſeback, who cannot overtake her.

Ver. 19. *Haſt thou given the Horſe Strength? haſt thou cloathed his Neck with Thunder?*] And now I ſpeak of the Horſe, let me ask thee again, Who was it that made him ſo much ſuperiour to other Creatures in Strength and in Courage? Didſt thou give him his valiant Spirit, or cloath his Neck with ſuch a ſtately Main?

Ver. 20. *Canſt thou make him afraid as a Graſs-hopper? the Glory of his Noſtrils is terrible.*] Or put that Vigour and Mettle into him, which makes him leap and bound in the Air like a Graſs-hopper: There is a Majeſty in his Looks; and when he ſnoars vehemently, it is terrible.

Ver. 21. *He paweth in the Valley, and rejoyceth in his Strength: he goeth on to meet the armed Men.*] He ſtamps impatiently on the Ground, and breaks it up with his Feet: he glories in his Strength, and goes out boldly to meet the Arms that oppoſe him.

Ver. 22. *He mocketh at Fear, and is not affrighted: neither turneth he back from the Sword.*] He derides all the dreadful Inſtruments of War, and cannot be diſmayed by them: he runs upon naked Swords;

Ver. 23. *The Quiver rattleth againſt him, the glittering Spear and the Shield.*] And is not daunted at the Noiſe of Arrows which come whizzing by his Ears, nor at the ſharp Points of Spears and Launces which are thruſt at his Breaſt.

Ver. 24. *He ſwalloweth the Ground with Fierceneſs and Rage: neither believeth he that it is the Sound of the Trumpet.*] He makes the Earth quake and tremble, as he gallops over it, and rids Abundance of Ground in a Moment: neither can he ſtand ſtill, when he hears the Sound of the Trumpet:

Ver. 25. *He ſaith among the Trumpets, Ha, ha; and he ſmelleth the Battle afar off, the Thunder of the Captains, and the ſhouting.*] But the louder it is, the more he neighs and dances for Joy. He perceiveth the Battle before it begins, by the thundering Voice of the Captains, and the ſhouting of the Soldiers.

Ver. 26. *Doth the Hawk flie by thy Wiſdom, and ſtretch her Wings toward the South?*] Behold, alſo, how the Hawk mounts up aloft. Didſt thou give her thoſe ſwift Wings; or teach her, when the Winter comes, to fly into the Southern Parts, that ſhe may ſtill enjoy the Warmth of the Sun?

Ver. 27. *Doth the Eagle mount up at thy Command, and make her Neſt on high?*] But what Bird ſoars ſo high as the Eagle? Is ſhe beholden to thee for that Strength which carries her into the Clouds? or was it by thy Direction, that ſhe builds her Neſt quite out of all Mens Reach?

Ver. 28. *She dwelleth and abideth on the Rock, upon the Crag of the Rock, and the ſtrong Place.*] She dwells on the Top of high Rocks; in the ſteep and craggy Rock, as in an inacceſſible Fortreſs, ſhe ſettles her abode.

Ver. 29. *From thence ſhe ſeeketh the Prey, and her Eyes behold afar off.*] There ſhe leaves her young ones ſafely, while ſhe goes to provide them Food; from thence (ſo ſharp is her Sight) ſhe ſpies her Prey a vaſt Way off.

Ver. 30. *Her young ones alſo ſuck up Blood: and where the Slain are, there is ſhe.*] Which when ſhe hath ſeized and torn, ſhe brings to her Neſt, that they may ſuck its Blood: ſhe looks down to the very Earth; and where the Carcaſſes lie, there may ſhe be found.

CHAP. XL.

ARGUMENT.

Job *modeſtly declining to ſay one Word in his own Defence, (though he was graciouſly invited by* GOD *to ſpeak, if he had any Plea remaining) is ſtill more humbled by a plain Declaration from the Divine Majeſty, that* Elihu *had Reaſon to reprove him for his immoderate Complaints, (which ſome might look upon as an Accuſation of* GOD's *Providence)*

and for maintaining his own Righteousness so much, and God's *Righteousness so little, in the Dispute he had had with his Friends. Shewing him withal, that he was not sensible enough of the infinite Distance and Inequality between him and* God; *when he desired so vehemently to argue his Case with him, that he forgot to make those Submissions to the Divine Majesty, which had better become him. This Disproportion is most lively represented and illustrated, by an admirable Description of the Strength of the* BEHEMOTH, *a Word of* Egyptian *Termination; signifying, not the* Elephant, *(which seldom lies down, and never among Reeds, as this doth, v. 21.) but a Creature in that Country, called by the* Greek *Writers* Hippopotamus, *i. e. River-Horse. For it appears by the Second Book of* Esdras, *Chap. VI. v. 49. that the* Hebrews *reckon* Behemoth, *not among the Land Creatures, but among those belonging to the Water, which were created on the fifth Day. And there is none, that we know, of that Sort, to whom the Characters here mentioned belong, but the Creature now named.*

Ver. 1. *Moreover, the* LORD *answered Job, and said,*] After a short Silence, to see what *Job* would reply to this long Discourse, the LORD proceeded, and said;

Ver. 2. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth* GOD, *let him answer it.*] Why dost thou not speak? Hath not the Almighty brought Arguments enow to convince thee? Let him that will argue with GOD about his Providence, first make an Answer to these Questions.

Ver. 3. ¶ *Then Job answered the* LORD, *and said,*] Then *Job*, whose Confusion had made him silent, answered with great Humility, and said;

Ver. 4. *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine Hand upon my Mouth.*] Behold, I am a wretched Creature, and not worthy to speak unto thy Majesty; nor do I know what to answer; and therefore I will hold my Peace.

Ver. 5. *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer: yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.*] I have said too much already, in speaking only these two Words to Thee: But I have done; I will add no more.

Ver. 6. ¶ *Then answered the* LORD *unto Job, out of the Whirlwind, and said,*] Then the Divine Majesty spake again, after the same Manner as before, saying,

Ver. 7. *Gird up thy Loins now like a Man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*] What hast thou (who desiredst so much to plead with me) lost thy Courage? pluck up thy Spirit, Man, and prepare thy self (as I said at the first) to answer the Questions I shall farther ask thee.

Ver. 8. *Wilt thou also disannul my Judgment? wilt thou condemn me that thou mayest be righteous?*] Is there any Reason to suspect my Care of Mankind, who have shewn it so much about other Creatures? Canst thou not defend thy self, but thou must also complain of me? must I be condemned, that thou mayst be justified?

Ver. 9. *Hast thou an Arm like* GOD? *or canst thou thunder with a Voice like him?*] Who art thou, that talkest so much of thine own Innocence, that thou forgettest to maintain thy Righteousness? Hast thou a Power equal to mine; or canst thou speak with a Voice like this; or imitate the Thunder thou heareſt in the Clouds?

Ver. 10. *Deck thy self now* with *Majesty and Excellency, and array thy self with Glory and Beauty.*] Lift up thy self then; and let me see thee appear in the highest Majesty: put on thy Robes, and shew thy self in such Royal State, that all may Honour and Reverence thy excellent Greatness.

Ver. 11. *Cast abroad the Rage of thy Wrath: and behold every one* that is *proud, and abase him.*] Let all thine Adversaries round about thee (as becomes a mighty Prince) feel the Fierceness of thy Wrath; frown upon all the haughty, and make them hang down their Heads.

Ver. 12. *Look on every one* that is *proud,* and *bring him low: and tread down the Wicked in their Place.*] Look, I say, upon every proud Oppressor, and make him cringe and throw himself at thy Feet: tread down all the Wicked, wheresoever thou shalt find them.

Ver. 13. *Hide them in the Dust together,* and *bind their Faces in secret.*] Cast them all into one Grave, that the World may be no more troubled with them: cover those Faces with perpetual Shame and Confusion, which now bear themselves so high, and overlook all others.

Ver. 14. *Then will I also confess unto thee, that thine own right Hand can save thee.*] When I see thee do such Things as these, then will I my self also magnify thy Power, and acknowledge that thou needest none of my Help to deliver thee.

Ver. 15. ¶ *Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee, he eateth Grass as an Ox.*] But consider a while (if thou art not yet humble enough) a Creature * which I have made in a Country not far from thee: He lives among the Fishes in the great River of *Egypt*, but he feeds upon the Earth, and eateth Grass like an Ox.

* *Behemoth*, i. e. River-Horse.

Ver. 16. *Lo now, his Strength* is *in his Loins, and his Force* is *in the Navel of his Belly.*] Consider, I say, the Greatness of his Strength, and the Firmness of his Flesh, not only in his Loins, but even in the Navel of his Belly, where other Creatures are wont to be weak and tender.

Ver. 17. *He moveth his Tail like a Cedar: the Sinews of his Stones are wrapt together.*] He hath a Tail as thick and as stiff as a Cedar, but he bends and throws it back at his Pleasure: The Nerves of his Thighs are so many, that they are intricate and perplexed one within another.

Ver. 18. *His Bones* are *as strong Pieces of Brass, his Bones* are *like Bars of Iron.*] His Bones (for so they are rather than Gristles) are as strong as Bars of Brass, and as hard and firm as Rods of Iron.

Ver.

Ver. 19. *He is the chief of the Ways of* GOD: *He that made him, can make his Sword to approach unto him.*] He is one of the principal Works of GOD, a very singular Instance of his Power: He that made him hath fastened such crooked Teeth in his Jaws, exceeding sharp, that therewith he mows the Grass and the Corn as with a Sythe.

Ver. 20. *Surely the Mountains bring him forth Food, where all the Beasts of the Field play.*] For he goes in the Night to graze upon the Hills, in the Company of the rest of the Beasts of the Field, who sport themselves in those rich Pastures:

Ver. 21. *He lieth under the shady Trees, in the Covert of the Reeds and Fens.*] But (in the Day) he lies down in shady and close Places, under the Covert of the Reeds, and in the fenny Mud.

Ver. 22. *The shady Trees cover him* with *their Shadow: The Willows of the Brook compass him about.*] The bushy Trees, which are there very numerous, afford him a Shelter: He is incompassed with the Willows and the Osiers, which grow in Abundance on the Banks of *Nile*.

Ver. 23. *Behold, he drinketh up a River*, and *hasteth not: He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his Mouth.*] Nay, behold he dives to the very Bottom of the River, and there takes his Repose without Fear: He will be secure, tho' *Jordan* also should break out, and be poured upon his Mouth.

Ver. 24. *He taketh it with his Eyes:* His *Nose pierceth through Snares.*] Who dare come in his Sight, or attempt to take him by open Force? Where is he that will undertake to fasten Hooks in his Nose?

CHAP. XLI.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter another Creature of vast Bigness and Strength is described, called in the Arabian *Language* LEVIATHAN. *By which we are not, in this Place, to understand the* Whale; *because that Fish is not armed with such Scales as* Leviathan *is here said to have, Ver.* 15. *Nor is impenetrable, as every Body knows; and, to say no more, never creeps upon the Earth, which is part of the Description of this* Leviathan, *Ver.* 3. *Whereby we are therefore to understand the* Crocodile, *(to whom every Part of this Description exactly belongs) a Creature as big again as a Man of the greatest Stature, and in some Places vastly greater: There having been Crocodiles seen of twenty, nay forty Foot long; and in some Places of an hundred. To this fierce and untameable Creature* GOD *sends* Job, *that he might learn more Humility than to contend with his Majesty, when he saw how unable he was to stand before one of his Creatures. That Use he himself teaches* Job *to make of this Description, Ver.* 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 1. CANST *thou draw out Leviathan with an Hook? Or his Tongue with a Cord which thou letteſt down?*] There is another Creature also in the same River, which I would have thee consider; and behold therein the divine Power, and humane Weakness. Canst thou catch the Leviathan * as you do other Fishes? Canst thou let down a Line, and draw him out by the Tongue with a Hook? * *Crocodile.*

Ver. 2. *Canſt thou put an Hook into his Noſe? Or bore his Jaw through with a Thorn?*] When thou hast made a Cord of the Rushes of the River, canst thou put it about his Nose; or strike an Iron, as sharp as a Thorn, into his Jaw?

Ver. 3. *Will he make many Supplications unto thee? Will he ſpeak ſoft* Words *unto thee?*] Will he importune thy Favour, and with many Prayers beseech thee to spare him? Will he sue for his Liberty with submissive Words, and speak thee fair to let him go?

Ver. 4. *Will he make a Covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a Servant for ever?*] Will he enter into Bonds, and make a solemn Covenant with thee, never to do thee Hurt, but to be thy Slave, and thee Service for ever?

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou play with him, as* with a *Bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy Maidens?*] Wilt thou adventure to play with him, as with a Sparrow? Or tie him by the Leg, for the Sport and Pastime of thy Daughters?

Ver. 6. *Shall the Companions make a Banquet of him? Shall they part him among the Merchants?*] Shall the Society of Fishermen make a Feast for Joy they have taken him; and sell their Share in him among the Merchants?

Ver. 7. *Canſt thou fill his Skin with barbed Irons? Or his Head with Fiſh-ſpears?*] Where is the Dart wherewith thou canst hope to penetrate his Skin? Or the Fish-spear that is able to wound his Head?

Ver. 8. *Lay thine Hand upon him, remember the Battel, do no more.*] Go, and touch him if thou dareſt: The Battel will be soon ended, for thou shalt not do it the second Time.

Ver. 9. *Behold, the Hope of him is in Vain: ſhall not* one *be caſt down even at the Sight of him?*] Mark what I say; he will be sorely disappointed that thinks to take him: For he will be ready to sink down with Fear at the very Sight of him.

Ver. 10. *None* is so *fierce that dare ſtir him up: Who then is able to ſtand before me?*] Though he lie asleep on the Shore, there is none so hardy as to dare to awake him. Who is he then that takes upon him to contend with me? If one of my Creatures be so terrible, how dangerous is it to provoke my Majesty?

Ver. 11. *Who hath prevented me, that I ſhould repay him? whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine.*] And where is the Man to whom I am a Debtor? How came I, that made the whole World, to be obliged to thee or any one else? Did you first begin to do me Kindnesses, that I should owe you a Requital?

Ver. 12. *I will not conceal his Parts, nor his Power, nor his comely Proportion.*] What Insolence is this to dispute with me, when thou art not able to stand before this single Work

of

of my Hands? None of whose Limbs or Joints I will conceal, nor forbear to speak of his Strength, and of the comely Disposition of all his Parts.

Ver. 13. *Who can discover the Face of his Garment?* Or *who can come* to him *with his double Bridle?*] And first take a View of his skaly Skin, wherewith he is covered: who hath ever stript him of that upper Garment? Or who dare come within his doubled Snout?

Ver. 14. *Who can open the Doors of his Face? His Teeth* are *terrible round about.*] Who will venture to open his wide Jaws, and so much as look into his Mouth, in which his long Rows of Teeth are very dreadful?

Ver. 15. His *Scales* are his *Pride, shut up together* as with *a close Seal.*] The Scales of his Back are like the Plates of a Shield, which I have provided for his Defence: Every one of them is closely compacted, and strictly sealed to the next.

Ver. 16. *One is so near to another, that no Air can come between them.*] They are knit so close, that the Air, which presses into all Things else, cannot come between them.

Ver. 17. *They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundred.*] They cleave one to another, they hold so fast together, that no Art or Violence can make a Separation.

Ver. 18. *By his Neezings a Light doth shine, and his Eyes* are *like the Eye-lids of the Morning.*] When he sneezeth, as he lies gaping in the Sun, the Spirits break forth with such a Force, that they seem to sparkle: And when he riseth up out of the River, his Eyes appear before the rest of his Body, as the Morning Light before the Sun.

Ver. 19. *Out of his Mouth go burning Lamps,* and *Sparks of Fire leap out.*] The Steam also which then comes out of his Mouth is as vehement as if it were full of burning Torches; or there were a Fire in him, that sends forth Sparks.

Ver. 20. *Out of his Nostrils goeth Smoak, as* out *of a seething Pot or Caldron.*] Out of his Nostrils goes a Smoak like the Reek of a seething Pot or a boiling Caldron.

Ver. 21. *His Breath kindleth Coals, and a Flame goeth out of his Mouth.*] His Breath is so hot, though he come out of the Water, that it is sufficient to kindle Coals; and may be called a Flame, which issues out of his Mouth.

Ver. 22. *In his Neck remaineth Strength, and Sorrow is turned into Joy before him.*] His Neck is exceeding strong, as if it were the very Seat of Strength: Sadness and Terrour marches before him, and seizes on all those that meet him.

Ver. 23. *The Flakes of his Flesh are joyned together: They are firm in themselves, they cannot be moved.*] The Muscles of his Flesh are glewed together; every one of them is compact and solid; they are not easily moved.

Ver. 24. *His Heart is as firm as a Stone; yea, as hard as a Piece of the nether* Millstone.] He is as far from Fear, as he is from Pity: For his Heart is as firm as a Stone; as hard as an Anvil, or a Piece of the nether Millstone.

Ver. 25. *When he raiseth up himself, the Mighty are afraid: By reason of Breakings they purifie themselves.*] But the stoutest Hearts tremble when he lifts himself up above the Water: They are seized with such a Fright, that they are at their Wits End, and know not which Way to turn themselves.

Ver. 26. *The Sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold; the Spear, the Dart, nor the Habergeon.*] Though they assault him with the Sword, it will do them no Service; for the Hardness of his Skin will break it in Pieces: the Spear, also the Dart and the Javelin are altogether as feeble, and cannot enter into him.

Ver. 27. *He esteemeth Iron as Straw,* and *Brass as rotten Wood.*] All the other Weapons of Iron (which the Wit of Man can devise) he values no more than a Straw; and those of Brass, no more than rotten Wood.

Ver. 28. *The Arrow cannot make him flee: Sling-stones are turned with him into Stubble.*] The Arrow shot out of the strongest Bow cannot make him flee: And those Stones which are thrown out of a Sling with so much Force, move him no more than a little Chaff.

Ver. 29. *Darts are counted as Stubble: He laugheth at the shaking of a Spear.*] Lay at him with heavy Clubs, and he regards them no more than if they were Stubble: Shake the Launce at him, and he contemns its most violent Thrusts.

Ver. 30. *Sharp Stones* are *under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed Things upon the Mire.*] For instead of him, it meets only with the rough Shells wherewith he is armed; which are so hard, that he beats back the sharpest Weapon, and throws into the Mire.

Ver. 31. *He maketh the Deep to boil like a Pot: He maketh the Sea like a Pot of Ointment.*] When he tumbles about in the Bottom of the River, he raises Bubbles on the Top; and the Water of the Lake is so troubled with the slimy Mud which he stirreth up, that it looks like a Pot of Ointment.

Ver. 32. *He maketh a Path to shine after him; one would think the Deep* to be *hoary.*] When he swims, he makes Furrows in the Face of the Deep; and leaves a Path behind him so covered with a Froth and Foam, that it looks as if it were grown old, and were full of gray Hairs.

Ver. 33. *Upon Earth there is not his like, who is made without Fear.*] His Fellow is not to be found upon the Earth; where he creeps indeed in the Dust, but is so made that he cannot be trodden under Foot and bruised.

Ver. 34. *He beholdeth all high* Things: *He is a King over all the Children of Pride.*] No, though he lie so low, yet he despises the tallest Beast; and reigns over the Oxen and Camels, and all those Creatures whose long Legs raise them to the loftiest Height: whom he masters and rends in Pieces at his Pleasure.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter concludes the Book, with an Account how Job *compleated the Submission which he had begun before to make to* God. *Whose Pardon he ſorrowfully begs; confeſſing and repenting of his Fault; reſigning himſelf intirely to be inſtructed by him: but reſolving never hereafter to complain, nor to move any Queſtions about his Providence. This Repentance* God *accepts; and for his Sake grants a Pardon alſo to his Friends, whom he condemns as more faulty than* Job. *Who after this receives extraordinary Marks of* God's *Favour; and hath ſuch an ample Recompence made him for his Loſſes, as may incourage all Poſterity to perſevere in well-doing and patient Suffering; believing ſtedfaſtly that nothing can be done or permitted by* God, *without much Reaſon, (whoſe Wiſdom ſhines ſo glorioufly in all his Works,) and humbly expecting a comfortable Iſſue out of all our Troubles.*

Ver. 1. *THEN Job anſwered the* Lord, *and ſaid,*] Theſe Words ſo lively repreſented the Power and Wiſdom of God in his Works, that *Job* ſeeing his Errour more clearly than ever, ſubmitted himſelf unto the Great Lord of all, and ſaid;

Ver. 2. *I know that thou canſt* do *every* thing, *and* that *no Thought can be with-holden from thee.*] I am abundantly ſatisfied that thy Power is as large as thy Will; and that nothing can hinder Thee from effecting every Thing which thou deſigneſt: but as thou hadſt Reaſon to caſt me down, ſo thou canſt reſtore me, and lift me up again.

Ver. 3. *Who* is *he that hideth Counſel without Knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.*] I am ſenſible alſo of the Juſtice of the Reproof which thou haſt given me, (XXXVIII. 2.) and do confeſs I very much forgot my ſelf, when I adventured to talk ſo ignorantly of thy wiſe Adminiſtrations. It was that which made me ſo raſh as to diſcourſe of Things far above my Reach; wonderful Things, which I ought humbly to admire, not arrogantly cenſure.

Ver. 4. *Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*] Be not angry with me, I beſeech thee, but graciouſly hear me ſpeaking in thy own Words. I do not pretend to give an Account of thy wonderful Works, and of thy Providence; and therefore ask me no more Queſtions, (XXXVIII. 3.) but let me learn of thee, and do thou inſtruct my Ignorance.

Ver. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear: but now mine Eye ſeeth thee.*] Something I did know before of thy Greatneſs, and Mightineſs, and Wiſdom; but nothing ſo clearly as I do now, by this Revelation and viſible Appearance of thy dreadful Majeſty.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I abhor* my ſelf, *and repent in Duſt and Aſhes.*] Which touches me with a ſenſible Diſpleaſure againſt my ſelf, for my undecent Complaints, and vehement Expoſtulations, and eager Deſires to die, or to be delivered: I condemn them all, (together with whatſoever I have ſpoken too boldly about thy Government,) and in the moſt ſorrowful Manner repent, that I have juſtified my ſelf ſo much, and thee ſo little.

Ver. 7. ¶ *And it was ſo, that after the* Lord *had ſpoken theſe Words unto Job, the* Lord *ſaid to Eliphaz the Temanite, My Wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two Friends: for ye have not ſpoken of me* the thing that is *right, as my Servant Job* hath.] Which ingenuous Confeſſion pleaſed the Lord ſo much, that he did not chide *Job* any farther: but turning his Voice to *Eliphaz*, (his principal Accuſer,) he ſaid, I am angry with thee, and with thy two Friends: For you have made a perverſe Conſtruction of the Afflictions I ſent upon *Job*; whom, notwithſtanding all his Errours, I acknowledge to be my Servant, and to have ſpoken better of me than you have done.

Ver. 8. *Therefore take unto you now ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams, and go to my Servant Job, and offer up for your ſelves a Burnt-Offering; and my Servant Job ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept: leſt I deal with you* after your *Folly, in that ye have not ſpoken of me* the thing which is *Right, like my Servant Job.*] And therefore take no leſs than ſeven Bullocks, and as many Rams, and carry them to my Servant *Job*; whom I appoint to be your Prieſt, to offer for you a Burnt-offering, in Token of my abſolute Dominion over all Creatures. And that faithful Servant of mine ſhall pray for you, and obtain your Pardon: for I have a great Love to him, and will be favourable to you for his Sake. Do not fail to go about this, leſt I inflict ſome grievous Puniſhment upon you; becauſe, as I ſaid, you have made an ill Repreſentation of my Providence, and repeated thoſe Things confidently, which my Servant *Job* ſhewed you to be falſe.

Ver. 9. *So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite,* and *Zophar the Naamathite, went, and did according as the* Lord *commanded them: the* Lord *alſo accepted Job.*] So *Eliphaz* and his two Companions ſubmitted themſelves alſo unto God, and went, as he commanded them, and deſired *Job* to interceed for them. And the Lord heard his Prayer, and was reconciled to them.

Ver. 10. *And the* Lord *turned the Captivity of Job, when he prayed for his Friends: alſo the* Lord *gave Job twice as much as he had before.*] And at that very Time when *Job* was performing this charitable Office for his Friends, the Lord was pleaſed to begin to reſtore to him all thoſe Things which had been taken away from him: and never ceaſed, till he had not only eſtabliſhed him in his former Splendour, but made him twice as rich as he was before.

Ver. 11. *Then came there unto him all his Brethren, and all his Siſters, and all they that had been of his Acquaintance before, and did eat*

Bread with him in his House: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the Evil that the LORD *had brought upon him: every Man also gave him a Piece of Money, and every one an Ear-ring of Gold.*] All his Kindred likewise and his familiar Acquaintance (whom his unusual Affliction had estranged from him, XIX. 3.) when they heard of the Wonders the LORD had done for him, came to visit him and feast with him: And after they had condoled his Misery, and testified their Sorrow for all that had befaln him, they congratulated his happy Recovery; and, in Token of their Joy, every one of them presented him with a Piece of Money, and a Pendant of Gold.

Ver. 12. *So the* LORD *blessed the latter End of Job more than his Beginning: for he had fourteen Thousand Sheep, and six Thousand Camels, and a Thousand Yoke of Oxen, and a Thousand She-asses.*] Thus the LORD impoverished this good Man, only to make him richer. For instead of seven Thousand Sheep, which he had before his Troubles, he found he had fourteen Thousand, when they were ended; and for three Thousand Camels, which were taken from him, the LORD gave him six Thousand: and multiplied his Yokes of Oxen, which were but five Hundred, into a Thousand; and his She-Asses, in the same Proportion.

Ver. 13. *He had also seven Sons, and three Daughters.*] His Wife also became very fruitful, and brought him as many Children as he had lost; seven Sons and three Daughters.

Ver. 14. *And he called the Name of the first, Jemima, and the Name of the second, Kezia, and the Name of the third, Kerenhappuch.*] And to preserve the Memory of so marvellous a Deliverance, (of which they were so many living Monuments) he called the Name of the first *Jemima*, that is, the Day; because of the Felicity, wherein he now shone, after a sad Night of Affliction, wherein he had lain; and the second *Kezia*, (a Spice of an excellent Smell) because GOD had healed his filthy stinking Ulcers, which made even his Wife refuse to come near him, XIX. 17. and the last he called *Kerenhappuch*, i. e. Plenty restored, or an Horn of Varnish; because GOD had wiped away the Tears which fouled his Face, (as he complains XVI. 16.)

Ver. 15. *And in all the Land were no Women found so fair as the Daughters of Job: and their Father gave them Inheritance among their Brethren.*] The Beauty also of these Women proved as bright as their Names; for there were none so amiable in all that Country: and their Father did not (as the Manner was) endow them with a small Portion of his Goods, but (having a large Estate, and a great Affection to them) he made them Coheirs with their Brethren, in the Inheritance which he left them.

Ver. 16. *After this lived Job an Hundred and forty Years, and saw his Sons, and his Sons Sons,* even *four Generations.*] After which glorious Restitution of himself and his Family, his Years were multiplied as well as his Estate: For the LORD added almost an Age and a half (no less than an Hundred and forty Years) to those he had lived before; so that he had the Pleasure to see his Childrens Children to the fourth Generation:

Ver. 17. *So Job died,* being *old and full of Days.*] And departed not out of the World till he was so fully satisfied, that he desired not to live any longer.

AN APPENDIX TO THE PARAPHRASE.

HERE ends the Book of *Job*; whose short Sufferings (for the Space of XII Months, as the *Hebrews* reckon in *Seder Olam*) were recompensed with a very long Life in great Prosperity. If we could rely upon all their Traditions, this might have been added to the Paraphrase upon the last Words, that the whole Time of his Life was two Hundred and ten Years. For in the *Hierusalem Targum* upon XLII. *Exod.* 40. and in *Bereschit Rhabba* upon XLII. *Gen.* 2. they make acount that the *Israelites* staid just so long in *Egypt*: And in the *Chronicle* forenamed, and in *Bava Bathra*, and other Books, they tell us, that *Job* was born that very Year when *Jacob* went with his Family down thither to sojourn; and died that Year when they were delivered from thence by the Hand of *Moses*. But this agrees neither with what other of their Authors say, whom I mentioned in my Preface; nor

nor with the LXX. who in the laſt Verſe but one of this Book, inſert this Clauſe, *All the Days of his Life were Two Hundred and forty Years.*

This, indeed, might be eaſily reconciled with the Account before-mentioned, if we did but rectify their Numbers in the Beginning of that Verſe by the *Hebrew* Truth, and cut off the thirty Years which they have added to the true Time that he lived after his Recovery from his Sickneſs; for then this Paſſage alſo muſt be corrected, and inſtead of 240, we muſt ſet down 210. Which we might alſo prove in this Manner (out of *Seder Olam*, Cap. 3.) to be the right Account of his Age; becauſe it is ſaid, *ver.* 10. of the laſt Chapter, that *the Lord added to Job the double of what he had before*; and therefore if an Hundred and forty Years were added, he had ſeventy before, which in all make two Hundred and ten. But it is not worth our while to trouble our ſelves with ſuch Uncertainties; much leſs is it ſafe to rely upon any Thing, which is ſupported by no ſtronger Authority than the *Hebrew* Tradition. The Vanity of which appears moſt notoriouſly in this, that *Manaſſeh Ben Iſrael* ſaith *, it is evidently certain, by Tradition, that the *Mahometans* at this Day pay a great Reverence to this holy Man's Sepulchre, and honour it at *Conſtantinople* with much Religion and Devotion; when all Men that have any conſiderable Acquaintance with other Authors, beſides thoſe of their own Nation (upon which the *Hebrews* dote) may eaſily know, that the *Job* whom the *Turks* honour, was a Captain of the *Saracens*, who was ſlain when they beſieged that City, in the Year of Chriſt 675.

* Lib. 1. *de Reſurrect. Cap.* ult.

It will be to better Purpoſe, if I take notice of an Obſervation of theirs, which hath more Certainty in it, becauſe clearly founded upon the Holy Scriptures; which is, that *Job* was a Prophet among the *Gentiles*, and a Prophet of very eminent Quality and Degree: Who deſerved to have been at leaſt mentioned by *Joſephus* in his Book of *Antiquities*, where he hath not vouchſafed to name him; nay, to have been praiſed by the Son of *Syrach*, in his Catalogue of famous Men, XLIV. *Eccluſ.* &c. who were honoured in their Generations, and were the Glory of their Times. But, according to the Humour of the *Jews*, he magnifies only thoſe of their own Country, or ſuch from whom they were directly deſcended: not conſidering how much it was for their Honour, that by the Care of their noble Anceſtors, the Hiſtory of *Job*, and his excellent Vertues, had been preſerved. Which he ought not therefore to have omitted, but to have celebrated him among the Chief of thoſe worthy Perſons, *by whom* GOD *wrought great Glory; ſuch as did bear Rule in their Kingdoms, Men renowned for their Power, giving Counſel by their Underſtanding, and declaring Prophecies*, &c. XLIV. Eccluſ. 2, 3.

Nay, his Friends deſerved a ſhort Remembrance, who ſeem nothing inferior to the wiſe Men among the *Jews*, (though they miſtook in the Application of many excellent Truths) but are acknowledged by themſelves to have been Prophets among the *Gentiles*. And not without Reaſon; for *Eliphaz*, we read, IV. 13, *&c.* had Night-viſions, an Apparition of an Angel, and ſecret Whiſpers, like the ſtill ſmall Voice which *Elijah* heard, 1 *Kings* XIX. 12. which made *R. Sol. Jarchi* not fear to ſay, that the *Shechinah* was upon him. And *Elihu*, it is eaſy to diſcern, felt a Divine Power working in him mightily, XXXII. 8, 18, 19. which was not altogether a Stranger, he ſhews, (XXXIII. 15, 16.) to other Men; whom GOD in thoſe Days inſtructed by Dreams, amongſt other Ways that he had of communicating his Mind to them. But there was none equal to that wherein he made himſelf known to *Job*, who in *three* Things ſeems to have had the Pre-eminence above all the *Gentile* Prophets. *Firſt*, In that GOD was pleaſed to ſpeak to him aloud by a Voice from Heaven, XXXVIII. 1. (which the *Jews* call the *Bath Col*) and not merely in ſuch ſilent Whiſpers as he did to *Eliphaz*. *Secondly*, That this Voice was attended with a notable Token of a Divine Preſence, from whence it came, *viz.* a *Whirlwind*; which I take to have been ſomething like that *Sound as of a ruſhing mighty Wind*, wherein the Holy Ghoſt came upon the Day of *Pentecoſt*. And *Laſtly*, He ſaw likewiſe, in all Probability, the Appearance of ſome viſible Majeſty (XLII. 5.) ſuppoſe in a glorious Cloud (as the LXX ſeem to underſtand it, XXXVIII. 1.) or ſomething like that which *Moſes* beheld in the Buſh, when GOD firſt called unto him out of the midſt of it, III. *Exod.* 4.

Which need not at all puzzle our Belief; when we conſider that the Church in thoſe Days was Catholick, and not as yet confined to any one Family or Nation. GOD was pleaſed indeed to ſhew an extraordinary Grace to *Abraham*, in calling him out of his own Country and Father's Houſe, where Idolatry had taken a deep Root, or had been long growing without any Hope of Amendment. For if we may give any Credit to *Keſſeus*, a Mahometan Writer, or to *Elmacinus*, a Chriſtian, they were infected with it in the Days of *Heber*, who ſtoutly oppoſed it, but with ſo little Effect, that though GOD ſent a Whirlwind, which threw down all their Idols, and broke them in Pieces, that falſe Worſhip ſtill prevailed. But this doth not warrant us to imagine that GOD utterly rejected and neglected all other People; to whom he revealed himſelf in a very familiar Manner, and gave many Demonſtrations of his Divine Preſence among them, till they corrupted their Ways by ſuch abominable Idolatries, that they became altogether unprofitable, and unfit for the Society of that Holy Spirit which oft-times moved them. Even among the *Canaanites* (into whoſe Country GOD led *Abraham*) we find *Melchiſedeck* was then a Prieſt of the moſt high GOD; a greater Perſon than that Prophet, and the Miniſter of that Oracle (ſome fanſie) which *Rebekah* went to conſult when ſhe felt the Twins ſtruggling in her Womb, XXV. *Gen.* 22. To whom I might add ſeveral others, if I had a Mind to prolong this Diſcourſe.

And

And though the Book before mentioned (*Seder Olam Rabba*, Chap. 21.) is pleaſed to ſay, that the holy Ghoſt ceaſed to inſpire Men of any other Nation after the giving of the Law; yet it is eaſy to ſhew, that therein it contradicts even their own Affirmation elſewhere, which is grounded on good Reaſon, that *Balaam* was a Prophet divinely moved among the *Syrians* in *Meſopotamia*. He was a Man indeed of naughty Affections, and inclined to Superſtition, but ſtill had many Illuminations and Motions from the moſt High; as appears not only by his Predictions, but by the expreſs Words of *Moſes*, who ſays, *the Spirit of* GOD *came upon him*, XXIV. Numb. 2. To which if I ſhould add his own Teſtimony concerning himſelf, that he *heard the Words of* GOD, and *ſaw the Viſion of the Almighty*, and that in an extraordinary Manner, *having his Eyes open* in his Ecſtaſy, I ſee no Reaſon why it ſhould be rejected; eſpecially ſince he declared at the firſt, when the Princes of *Midian* importuned him to go with them, that he would be wholly guided by the LORD, in the Buſineſs; and when he was come to *Balak*, conſtantly went to meet the LORD, to ask him what he ſhould ſay, and profeſſed his Care to ſpeak what the LORD had put in his Mouth, XXII. 8. XXIII. 3, 12, 15, *&c.* Theſe Conſiderations, to which many more might be added, are ſufficient to ſhew, that there is little, if any Ground for the Opinion of *Theodoret*, who reſolves *, that *Balaam* did not enquire of the true GOD, though the Anſwer was given by him of whom he was ignorant, not by him whom he invoked: And that the Concluſion of St. *Baſil* †, or *Greg. Nyſſen* ‡, (it is uncertain whoſe Work it is wherein we find it) is more remote from Truth, who determine, that when the Scripture ſaith he went to conſult with GOD, we are thereby to underſtand the Devil. For ſhould we allow the Word *ELOHIM* or GOD to be ſo equivocal, that it may be applied not only to other excellent Beings beſides the Divinity, but to the Devil himſelf, (which is the Foundation there laid for that Concluſion) yet the Word *JEHOVAH* or LORD is never ſo uſed; and *Balaam* always ſays that he would go and meet with him. And accordingly the LORD is ſaid to put a Word in his Mouth, even then when juſt before we read that GOD *met him*, XXIII. 4, 5. Where it is moſt reaſonable by GOD to underſtand the Angel mentioned XXII. 35. whom the LORD employed to deliver his Mind unto him.

* *Quæſt.* 39. *in Num.*

† *Epiſt.* 80. *ad Euſtath.*

‡ *Lib. de Trinitate.*

All which I have ſaid to ſhew, that GOD did not quite deſert the *Gentile* World, as long as there were any conſiderable Relicks of the ancient Religion remaining among them; and they did not wholly divert to Fables, and deliver up themſelves to the Guidance of evil Spirits, againſt the apparent Teſtimony of the holy Spirit of GOD; who ſpake to them by ſuch good Men as *Job*, in whoſe Days thoſe Sinners were not only reproved, but puniſhed alſo by the Judges, who worſhipped the Sun, Moon, and Stars; which ſeems to have been the oldeſt Idolatry of all other, as not only *Maimonides*, but *Diodorus Siculus* obſerves. And if they had liſtened to ſuch Inſtructions, and not ſuffered themſelves to be led merely by Senſe, to which thoſe heavenly Bodies appeared in ſuch an amazing Brightneſs that ſtruck with Admiration (as the laſt named Author ſpeaks) they fanſied them to be θεὸς ἀΐδιος τε καὶ πρῶτος, *both Eternal and the firſt* GODS; we cannot conceive that they would have ſunk ſo low, as to fall into *Image Worſhip*: Which in *Job's* Country doth not ſeem to have obtained in his Days.

But the chiefeſt Part of the Wiſdom of this Prophet conſiſted in his Piety: of which he proved a rare Example, as I have ſaid already; eſpecially in Adverſity: Wherein he behaved himſelf with ſuch admirable Vertue, that though the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* do not mention him among thoſe who were famous for their *Faith*, (he not being of their Race to whom the Promiſes were made, yet) St. *James* in the next Epiſtle highly magnifies and applauds his *Patience*. And not only propounds him, together with the *Prophets* and holy Men, *who had ſpoken to them in the Name of the* LORD, *v.* 10. as a Pattern of well-doing, and contented ſuffering, to the *Chriſtian Hebrews*; but numbers him among thoſe bleſſed Souls, whoſe worthy Deeds we praiſe, and whoſe Happineſs we admire, *v.* 11. Or rather, he names him alone, as an Example of a happy Man, who indured more than that we read of in ancient Times, and in the End found the LORD ſo mercifully gracious and bountiful to him, that it may incourage all pious Men, to indure with ſuch a wonderful Submiſſion as he did.

Who, when he loſt his Goods, his Houſe, his Children, his Health, nay, was all over ulcerous, and in great Pain; and moreover, was ſollicited by his Wife to ſpeak irreverently, if not irreligiouſly of GOD, and to deny his Providence; and by his Friends was upbraided as an Hypocrite, nay, accuſed in their Paſſion as a tyrannical Oppreſſour; whereby they endeavoured to bereave him (as St *Ambroſe* obſerves *) of that great Comfort in Afflictions *culpi vacare*, to be conſcious of no enormous Crime, and to make him appear to himſelf as the Author of his Calamity; at which his Inferiours mockt and ſcoft, who had formerly had him in great Veneration; nay, it expoſed him to the Scorn of thoſe, who were not worthy to be ſet with the Dogs of his Flock; ſo that he look'd as if he had been deſerted by GOD, and made an Example of his heavieſt Diſpleaſure; yet he bare all at the very firſt, (when Men are wont to be ſhaken, nay, overthrown by the ſudden News of ſuch dreadful Diſaſters,) not only with much Reſolution, and Reſignation, but with hearty Thanksgiving; and through the whole Courſe of his Calamity, committed no Errour that I can diſcern, but what the indiſcreet and uncharitable Cenſures of his Friends provoked him unto: Which put him upon too frequent and long Juſtifications of himſelf, and perplex-

* Lib. 1. *de Interpel.* C. 4.

ed

ed him extreamly, (which seems his greatest Trouble) that he could not find out the Reason why GOD afflicted him so severely.

But in the Issue GOD revealed to him what it was fit for him to think in this Matter also: And thereby hath given us such Satisfaction in that great Controversie, and difficult Question about GOD's Providence, as is no where to be met withal, but in the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*. Even prudent Men, as St. *Ambrose* * observes in a Book he hath written about *Job*, are apt to be extreamly moved when they see the Wicked abound with good Things, and the Just very much afflicted: and truly, says he, it is *lubricus Locus*, a slippery Place, in which the Saints have scarce been able to tread in the Path of a true Opinion, as we see in *David*, and *Job*, who maintained a long Conflict with his three ancient Friends that came to comfort him, upon this Subject. And GOD himself brought the Dispute at last, to such a Conclusion, as may fully settle the Minds of all those who meet with this Book, and preserve them from being scandalized, or in the least offended, on such Occasions. The *Mahometans* themselves seem to be fully satisfied, as we read in the *Lives of the Fathers*, written in the *Arabian* Language by *Kessæus*; who brings in the most High, speaking to *Job*'s Friends after this Manner, * *Do you not know that* Job *is a Prophet of* GOD, *whom he hath chosen to his Apostleship*; *and to whom he hath committed his Inspiration?* GOD *would not have you think that he is angry with him*; *as you seem to gather from this afflicted State wherein he lies. For you know that* GOD *is wont to prove the Prophets, the Just, the Martyrs, and other good Men*; *wherein notwithstanding there is no Indignation, or Contempt of them, but Honour rather with* GOD *most High.*

* L. 11. *de Interpellatione, c.* 1.

* Hotting. *Hist. Orientalis, l.* 1. *c.* 3.

Thus St. *Chrysostom* I find most elegantly represents him as a far more glorious Spectacle when he sate on the Dunghil, than the greatest Prince, without his Vertue, is when he sits upon a Throne. "His Ulcers, says he *, were "far more valuable in my Account, than all their precious Stones. For "what Profit do we receive by them? What "Necessity, what Want do they supply? But "these Ulcers of his, are the Comfort of all "Manner of Heavinesse that can seize upon "us. You may know this to be true, if when "a Man hath lost his genuine and only Son, "you shew him a thousand Jewels and precious Stones; which give no Comfort at "all to his Grief, nor in the least asswage "his Trouble and Pain. But in this Case, "if you remember him of the Wounds of "*Job*, he presently finds some Ease; when "you ask him, saying, Why dost thou weep "and lament, O Man, on this Fashion? "Thou hast lost one Son, but that blessed "Man lost all the Children he had? And, "together with that Blow, received a Stroke "in his Flesh, and sate naked in the Dung, "besmeared all over with the Filth that ran "out of his Wounds; in a deep Consumption, which by little and little wasted that "just, that true, that devout Man; who "abstained from all Manner of Evil, and "had GOD himself for the Witness of his "Vertue. If thou dost but speak these "Words, instantly thou extinguishest the "Heavinesse of the Mourner, and riddest "him out of all his Grief; and so the Ulcers "of that righteous Man become more profitable to him than Jewels.

* *Hom. V. ad Populum Antiochenum.*

"Do you therefore conceive now that you "have that Champion before your Eyes; "and that you see the Dung, and him sitting "in it; a Statue of Gold, of Diamonds, I "am not able to say of what: For there is "nothing so precious as to be worthy to be "compared with that ulcerated Body, whose "Sores shine more brightly than the Beams "of the Sun; which inlighten only the Eyes "of the Body, but these illuminate the Eyes "of the Mind. They make us see, and they "made the Devil quite blind: For after he "had given those Wounds in his Body, he "fled and appeared no more. See here, Beloved, how great the Gain of Affliction is! "For when that righteous Man was rich, "and enjoyed his Ease, the Devil had something to say against him: Though falsely "indeed, yet this he had to say, *Doth Job serve* GOD *for Nought?* But after he had stript "him naked, and made him a Beggar, he "had not a Word to say; he durst not so "much as open his Mouth against him. "When he was rich, then he adventured to "wrestle with him, and threatned to supplant him: but after he had made him "Poor, deprived him of all he had, and reduced him to the extreamest Grief and Sorrow, he ran away, and durst not renew the "Assault. When his Body was sound, then "he laid violent Hands on him; but when "he had filled it with Wounds, he was routed and fled away vanquished. By this "thou seest, how much Poverty may prove "better than Riches, Weakness than Health, "Temptation than Ease and Quiet, to those "that are vigilant and watchful: Who make "a Profit of all these; and by fighting grow "more Illustrious and Courageous. Who "ever saw, who ever heard such noble Combats?

But there is none, that I have met withal, who represents him in such lively Colours, as the great St. *Basil*; who, in a Sermon of his * (the latter Part of which was occasioned by a lamentable Fire, that happened near their Church, and put it in Danger,) exhorts all the Rich, who were untouched by the Flames, to relieve their poor Neighbours, whose Goods were consumed in them; and then addressing himself to those, who had saved themselves, but nothing else, beseeches them, "Not to take their Loss too heavily, "nor to let their Minds be disturbed; but "to shake off the misty Cloud of Sorrow, "and to strengthen their Souls with such "generous and manly Thoughts, as might "turn this Accident into an Occasion of "Crowns. For which end, he advises them

* Tom. 1. *Homil. XXIII. p.* 565. *&c.*

" to put themſelves in Mind of the Conſtancy " of *Job*; and to ſay to themſelves; as he did, " *The* LORD *gave, and the* LORD *hath taken* " *away; as it ſeemed good to the* LORD, *ſo it* " *is come to paſs.* And by no means, ſays he, " let any of you be moved with what hath " happened, either to ſay, or think, there " is no Providence which rules our Affairs; " or preſume to accuſe the Diſpenſation and " Judgment of the LORD; but let him fix " his Eyes on that Champion, and make him " his Counſellour, who will adviſe him to " better Thoughts.

" Let him recount in Order all the Agonies " he endured, and then obſerve how bravely " he came off; and how the Devil threw all " his Darts at him in vain; not one of them " giving him a deadly Wound. Firſt he ſet " upon his Goods, and endeavoured to over- " whelm him with the doleful News of various " Calamities, which came tumbling, like the " Waves of the Sea, one upon the Neck of " another: But all to no Purpoſe, for the " juſt Man received them as a Rock doth the " Fury of a Tempeſt; turning the Rage of " the Waves into Froth, and ſtanding it ſelf " immoveable. He ſaid not a Word, that " we read of; he made no Complaints of " theſe Diſaſters; or if he ſaid any Thing, " we may well preſume, it was thoſe decent " and becoming Words which we read in the " Concluſion, *The* LORD *gave, and the* LORD " *hath taken away; as it pleaſed the* LORD, *ſo is it* " *come to paſs.* But he did not think any of " thoſe Calamities that befel him, to be " worth his lamenting with his Tears.

" Well, but there comes one afterward that " tells him a moſt diſmal Story, of the Death " of all his Children by the Fall of the Houſe " wherein they were making merry. At this, " it is true, he rent his Garments; and it is " the firſt Expreſſion of his Grief that we meet " withal, in Compliance with the Paſſions " of Nature, and to declare himſelf a moſt " tender Father. But he ſet ſome Bounds " to his Grief, and adorned what had hap- " pened with thoſe pious Words; *The* LORD " *gave, and the* LORD *hath taken away*, &c. As " if he ſhould have ſaid, I was called their " Father, as long as he, that made me ſo, " pleaſed. But now he hath taken off this " Crown of Children from my Head, and it " is not fit for me to contend and diſpute with " him about his own. Let that be which " ſeemeth beſt to the LORD. He it was that " formed them, I was but the Inſtrument. " Why ſhould I, who am but a Servant, fooliſhly " complain of my Maſter; and repine at that " Decree, which I cannot alter?

" With ſuch Words as theſe that righteous " Man wounded the Devil; and as one would " ſay, ſhot a Dart quite through his Heart. " Which ſo inraged him, that ſeeing him " ſtill a Conquerour, he made an Aſſault up- " on his Body; which he turned into Corrup- " tion, and made it become ſuch a Bag of " Worms, that from a Throne it was caſt " upon a Dunghil. And yet the good Man " remained immoveable: and when his Body " was torn, preſerved ſtill the hidden Treaſure " of Piety in his Soul, of which the Devil " could not rob him. And therefore, not " knowing what to do more, he betook him- " ſelf to his old Stratagem; and inſtigating " his Wife to entertain irreligious and bla- " phemous Thoughts, attempted that Way " to overthrow this Champion. For ſhe, ti- " red with the long Continuance of his Ca- " lamities, came to him, and clapping her " Hands at what ſhe beheld, upbraided him " with theſe lamentable Fruits of his Piety, " and rehearſing his former Proſperity, and " then pointing at his preſent Miſery, ask'd " him, if this was the Reward which he " received from the LORD for all his Sacrifices? " With Abundance of ſuch like Words, which " were enough to diſturb the moſt compoſed, " and ſubvert the moſt ſteady and reſolved " Mind. I am a Vagabond, ſaid ſhe, and am " forced to crouch to others like a Slave; " I, who was a Queen, am conſtrained to de- " pend upon my Servants for Relief; I, who " maintained many liberally, am now nouri- " ſhed my ſelf out of other Folks Charity. Ad- " ding, that it would be far better for him, " to provoke his angry Creator, by impious " Words, to cut him off, than by an unprofi- " table Patience thus to prolong both his, " and her Miſery.

" But he, more offended with theſe Words " than any of his former Sufferings, with " Eyes full of Indignation, look'd upon her " as an Enemy; and ask'd what ail'd her " to talk thus like one of the fooliſh Women? " Lay aſide, ſaid he, theſe Thoughts, and " let me hear no more of this Advice; which " makes me appear to my ſelf, as if one half " of me were wicked and irreligious. *What* " *ſhall we receive Good at the Hands of the* LORD, " *and ſhall we not ſuffer Evil?* Remember all " the paſt Happineſs thou haſt enjoyed, and " oppoſe better unto worſe. No Man's Life " is entirely and thoroughly happy. Τὸ δὲ " πανταχῇ εὖ πράττειν, μόνῳ Θεῷ. To be always " as well as we can wiſh, belongs to GOD " alone. If thou art grieved at what is pre- " ſent, fetch thy Comfort from what thou " haſt received before. Now thou weepeſt, " but formerly thou didſt laugh; now thou " art poor, but there was a Time when thou " wantedſt nothing. Then thou drankeſt of " the pure Fountain of Life; be content, " and drink now the more patiently of the " troubled Waters. Behold the Rivers, their " Streams are not clear in all Places; and " our Life thou knoweſt is like to one of " them, which ſlides away continually, and " is oft-times full of Waves, which come row- " ling one upon another: One Part of this " River is paſſed by, and another is running " on its Courſe. This Part of it is guſhing " out from the Fountain, and the next " is ready to follow it as ſoon as it is " gone. And thus we are all making great " Haſte to the common Sea; Death, I mean, " which ſwallows up all at laſt.

" If we receive good from the Hands of the " LORD, ſhall we not bear evil? Think of " that again. Shall we go about to compel " the Judge, to afford us juſt the very ſame

" Things

" Things for ever? Shall we preſume to in-
" ſtruct our LORD and Maſter how he ought
" to conduct our Life? He hath the Power
" of his own Decrees and Orders as he pleaſes,
" ſo he appoints our Portion for us. And we
" know that he is wiſe, and that he diſpenſes
" to his Servants what is moſt profitable for
" them. Do not then curiouſly pry into the
" Counſels and Reſolutions of thy LORD and
" Governour; only take in good Part, and
" affectionately embrace whatſoever is ordered
" by his Wiſdom. Love his Adminiſtration;
" and whatſoever he is pleaſed to give, re-
" ceive it with Pleaſure. Demonſtrate now
" in a ſorrowful Condition, that thou waſt
" worthy of all the Joy which thou hadſt for-
" merly in a better.

" Thus *Job* diſcourſing, he baffled the Devil
" once more; and gave him ſuch a Repulſe,
" that he made him perfectly aſhamed to ſee
" himſelf thus vanquiſhed. And what enſued
" after this? Why, when the Devil was beaten,
" his Diſeaſe fled away too, having aſſaulted
" him in vain, and got no Ground of him.
" His Fleſh began to recover into a ſecond
" Youth; he flouriſhed alſo in his Eſtate,
" which was reſtored to him with Increaſe.
" For Riches flowed ſo plentifully into his
" Houſe, that they were double to what he
" had before: Firſt, That he might be no
" Loſer by his Affliction; and Secondly, That
" he might have a merciful Reward of his
" Patience under it. Therefore it was that
" his Horſes, and Mules, and Camels, and
" Sheep, and all the reſt of his Revenue, were
" doubled, only his Children were no more
" than equal to the Number he had before,
" ſeven Sons, and three Daughters. The
" Reaſon was, becauſe his Beaſts indeed pe-
" riſhed entirely; but the better Part of his
" Children ſtill ſurvived, when they were taken
" from him. And therefore being again adorn-
" ed with as many Sons and Daughters as
" formerly he enjoyed, he had a double Por-
" tion of them alſo; thoſe who are preſent
" with him here, and thoſe who expected
" him in the other World. Behold then what
" good Things this juſt Man, *Job*, heaped up
" to himſelf, by his patient Submiſſion to
" GOD. And do thou, therefore, if thou
" haſt ſuffered grievouſly in this Fire, which
" the Malice of the Devil kindled, bear it
" conſtantly, and lenify the Affliction with
" theſe better Thoughts; according to that
" which is written, *Caſt all thy Care upon the*
" LORD, *and he will ſuſtain thee.*

To this Purpoſe that great Perſon St. *Baſil* diſcourſes, when he repreſents how *Job* received the firſt Aſſaults of his Affliction, and how happily it ended. And there is great Reaſon to think that he did not, in the Progreſs of it, ſwerve from thoſe good Beginnings, which had ſo bleſſed a Concluſion; but whatſoever Expreſſions fell from him, when he was engaged in the Heat of Diſputation, he ſtill preſerved ſuch a religious Temper of Mind, as made him not ceaſe to ſubmit himſelf reverently to GOD's Will, and to thank him for all the Benefits he had formerly received from his Bounty. Nor do I find any Cauſe for the Cenſures which *Maimonides* * (and out of him *Manaſſeh Ben Iſrael* †) hath paſſed upon the Diſputation between him and his four Friends, about Divine Providence, which he hath thus ſtated.

* *More Nevochim*, Part III. Cap. 23.
† Lib. 1. *De Reſurrectione*, C. 16.

" *Job* (ſaith he) maintains that Mankind is
" ſo vile a ſort of Being, that GOD doth not
" regard the beſt of them any more than he
" doth the worſt; but it is all one to him,
" when a Calamity comes, whether it light
" upon the Offenders, or upon the Innocent.
" Nay, more than this, he affirms that there
" is no Expectation after Death, and conſe-
" quently no Hope remaining for him. Which
are ſuch Blaſphemies, that *Maimonides* is fain to ſeek Excuſes for him; and for that End, alledges a common Saying among their wiſe Men, That *a Man is not apprehended, or ſeiz'd on, becauſe of his Grief*; that is, what he ſays in Extremity of Pain, is not imputed to him for Sin. But there is no Need of this Apology; for the Places he alledges, do not prove him guilty of uttering ſuch Things, as (to ſpeak in his Words) are Evil in the higheſt Degree. Though *Manaſſeh Ben-Iſrael* is ſo preſumptuous, as to charge him with ſuch a profane Denial of Divine Providence, at leaſt here below the Moon, that he makes him impute all his Miſery to the malignant Aſpect of the Planets, under which he was conceived and born.

To which Opinion of *Job*, ſay they, every one of his Friends oppoſed a particular Opinion of their own, differing each of them from the other. And firſt, *Eliphaz* endeavours to eſtabliſh this for a certain Truth, " That
" as Afflictions do not come by Chance, but
" by the Providence of GOD, ſo they are ſent
" for the Sins of Men; and therefore, with-
cut all doubt, *Job* was a great Offender, which was the Cauſe he was handled on this Manner. " This Opinion, ſays *Maimonides*, he held
" to the laſt; only was fain to add, in
" Concluſion, that all the Ways whereby we
" deſerve Puniſhment do not appear.

Then after him (when *Job* had argued againſt this) comes *Bildad*, who produces a new Opinion, grounded upon the Doctrine of Permutation, or Recompence, as they ſpeak; that is, " He believed the Evils which *Job*
" endured here, ſhould, if he proved innocent,
" be changed into good Things; and, in the
" Iſſue, be highly ſerviceable to him in ano-
" ther World.

After whom ſucceeds *Zophar*, with a different Reſolution from all theſe; which was, " That GOD acts according to his own Plea-
" ſure, and that we are not to ſearch for any
" Cauſe of his Actions out of his own Will;
" nor to ſay, why doth he this, and not
" that? In ſhort, we are not to ſeek the
" Way of Equity, and the Decree of Wiſdom
" in his Doings; for it neceſſarily belongs
" to his Eſſence, that he do what he will;
" and our Underſtanding is too ſhallow to
" comprehend the Secrets of his Wiſdom,

" whoſe

" whose Right and Property it is that he " may do according to his Pleasure, and for " no other Cause.

And these *four* Opinions about Providence, *Maimonides* undertakes to shew have had their several Asserters since, who have propagated them among their Scholars. *Job*'s Opinion, he saith, is the same with *Aristotle*'s, who attributed all to Accident. *Bildad* was followed by the Sect of *Mutazali*, (a Kind of *Pharisees* among the *Ismaelites*) who ascribed all to Wisdom. *Zophar*, by the Sect of *Assaria*, who attributed all to Will and Pleasure. And *Eliphaz*, he fancies, held the Opinion of the Law; which is, that GOD deals with Men according to their Works.

But when that all these Men had disputed, nothing moved *Job*, there stands up another, whose Name was *Elihu*, " who first proves " the Providence of GOD from prophetical " Dreams, XXXIII. 15. and to those Things " which *Eliphaz* had said, adds, according to " the Imagination of *Manasseh Ben-Israel*, the " Doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls, " (which he labours to find in *ver.* 14.) and " thereby in a wonderful Way, says he, re- " solves all the Doubt, by determining that " *Job*, and other just Men, may be punished " for Sins which they committed in a for- " mer Body.

But as there is no Footstep, that I can see, for this fond Conceit, which he honours with the Name of a Mystery; so it is evident these Men follow their own vain Inventions in all this Discourse, directly contrary to the Book it self. For they make *Job*'s Opinion the very worst of all the rest; when the LORD himself tells *Eliphaz*, in the Conclusion of the Book, (XLII. 7.) that he was angry with him and his two other Friends, because they had not spoken of him so rightly as *Job* had. And it doth not appear by their Speeches, that they held several Opinions about Providence, and took every one of them a different Way (that's a mere Rabbinical Subtlety) to solve the Doubt, wherein *Job*'s unusual Sufferings had perplexed them. But they seem to have harped all of them upon one and the same String, as I have represented in the *Arguments* before each Chapter.

From whence the Conclusion of *Maimonides* will be very evident, (which is the best thing he says) that *The Scope of the Book is, to establish the great Article of Providence; and thereby to preserve us from Error, in thinking that* GOD's *Knowledge is like our Knowledge, or his Intention, Providence, and Government, like our Intention, Providence and Government. Which Foundation being laid, nothing will seem hard to a Man whatsoever happens: Nor will he fall into dubious Thoughts concerning* GOD, *whether he knows what is befaln us or no, and whether he takes any Care of us. But rather he will be inflamed the more vehemently in the Love of* GOD; *as it is said in the End of this Prophecy*, Wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes. *So say our Wise-Men*, They that act out of Love, will rejoice in Chastisements.

THE



THE BOOK of *PSALMS* PARAPHRAS'D: With *Arguments* to each *Pſalm.*

PART I.

To all DEVOUT CHRISTIANS,

Eſpecially thoſe that frequent the

Daily Prayers of the CHURCH;

The Author Dedicateth this

PARAPHRASE upon the Book of *PSALMS*;

Wiſhing them Encreaſe of Grace and Comfort,

BY

Singing Praiſes unto GOD *with Underſtanding,*

PSALM. XLVII. 7.

THE PREFACE.

THE Work it ſelf proves ſo long, that I muſt make the Preface the ſhorter; which ſhall be confined to theſe two Heads: *Firſt*, A brief Account of the Book of Pſalms; *Secondly*, Of my Paraphraſe upon it.

I.

For the firſt, *The Book is a moſt admirable Piece of Poetry: which moves more powerfully, and touches the Mind more ſenſibly than Sentences in Proſe; eſpecially when it is in ſuch Perfection, as we find it in theſe divine Inſpirations. For, as* Melanchthon *truly ſpeaks, this is the moſt elegant Work extant in the World; and hath performed that, I may add, which* Plato *himſelf wiſh'd for, but confeſſed was above the Reach of mere Men. There was no more efficacious Way, that Philoſopher clearly ſaw, of inſtructing Youth, than by Odes and Songs; about which he diſcourſes at large, and gives a great many Cautions in his* Second Book of Laws; *but after all concludes at laſt,* * τῶν ϑ Θεῶ, ἢ ϑείω τινὶ, ἀν εἴη, This muſt be the Work of GOD, or of ſome Divine Man; *Wherein he plainly acknowledges the Defect of their Inſtitution (though certain Poems were pretended then to have been anciently made by their Goddeſs* Iſis) *and marvellouſly juſtifies the Hebrew Diſcipline, who taught their Children or Scholars by* Hymns.

* *Page* 657. Edit. Serran.

Which Moſes, *the Man of* GOD, *began to compoſe,* Exod. *XV.* Deut. *XXXII. and other inſpired Perſons afterwards imitated,* Judg. *V.* 1 Sam. *II. but was brought to Perfection by* David. *Who, as he was an admirable Artiſt in Muſick,* 1 Sam. *XVI.* 18. *and himſelf invented ſome Muſical Inſtruments, as we learn from the Prophet* Amos *VI.* 5. *ſo was an incomparable Poet,* 2 Sam. *XXIII.* 1, 2. *and took all Occaſions to exerciſe this Faculty, not on ſuch low Subjects as thoſe to which it is commonly debaſed, but in Abundance of Divine Meditations; which are gathered together in this Book; wherein he calls upon them to liſten unto him, ſaying:* Come, ye Children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the Fear of the LORD, *Pſal.* XXXIV. 11.

It is called in their Language Sepher Tehillem, *the Book of Pſalms, or Hymns,* i. e. Praiſes of the Lord: *Becauſe, though there are many Complaints, and Imprecations, and Prayers in it, yet the greateſt Part are Praiſes or Thankſgivings unto* GOD: *And in thoſe other, there are many Mixtures of Acknowledgments what* GOD *had formerly done for him, or of Confidence what he would ſtill do, or of Reſolutions how thankful he would be, when* GOD *granted him Deliverance. Which give them ſuch a ſtrange Power* to cure Heavineſs, to extirpate Grief, to wipe away Sorrow, to lay aſleep troubleſome Thoughts and Paſſions, to eaſe us of our Cares, to recreate thoſe who are oppreſſed with any Sort of Pains, *(they are the Words of* Proclus, *Archbiſhop of* Conſtantinople *) as well as to move Compunction for Sin, and to ſtimulate unto Piety; *that no Book in the World is to be compared with it for theſe Purpoſes.*

* Serm. de Incarn. Dom.

And as it is called the Book of Pſalms, *or* Praiſes, *from the major Part; ſo they are called* David's *Pſalms, becauſe he made the* moſt *of them; though it muſt be confeſſed, there were ſeveral other Authors; by whom* ſome *of them were compoſed.*

In the Hebrew they are divided, like Moſes *his Law, into five Books, as I ſhall ſhew in due Place; and ſo may be called a* Second Pentateuch: *Which ſeem to have been collected by ſeveral Perſons, (as will appear in the Preface to each of them;) for no other Reaſon but that can be given, why all that belong to one Subject were not put together; or at leaſt, all thoſe compoſed by* David *placed by themſelves, and not ſo mixed, as they are, with thoſe made by other Authors.*

Some think they were gathered together, by the Friends of Hezekiah, *before the Captivity. But if they had been ſo, they would, in all Probability, have been diſpoſed in ſuch Order as they were penned; all the ſacred Books being preſerved in the Temple, as* Joſephus *witneſſes,* † *with great Care; from whence they might have taken the Copies of them, with the Names of all their Authors; which now, in many of them, are wanting. Which makes it more likely*

† Antiq. L. III. C. 1.

likely, that after the Temple and the sacred Records were burnt by the King of Babylon's Army, some pious Persons collected as many as they could find, by enquiring among their Friends, in those good Mens Hands who had transcribed them heretofore for their own private Use, every one as he had most need. For the Songs of Sion the People were very well acquainted withal, though it lay desolate, as it appears by the CXXXVII. Psalm; where the Babylonians desire to hear one of them sung by the mournful Captives. Who preserved them, no doubt, to their Comfort, in that sad Condition, and added to them such as were made by divine Men, during its Continuance, and after their Return from Captivity.

When, as St. Athanasius* resolves in his Synopsis, (following the Hebrew Tradition) Esdras put them together in one Volume, as we now have them, which is not affirmed without Reason: for we find that the Foundation of the Second Temple was no sooner laid, but Ezra (as the Hebrews call him) restored the ancient Custom of Psalmody, or singing Psalms of Praise, (Ezra III. 10, 11.) which David had appointed to accompany the Sacrifices as soon as the Ark was settled, (1 Chron. VI. 31. XVI. 17. Ecclus. L. 15, 16, &c.) and which Solomon continued after he had built the Temple, and brought the Ark into it, 2 Chron. V. 12, 13.

* Tom. II. p. 86.

Now, when all those bloody Sacrifices were abolished, by the Offering which CHRIST made of himself, the Sacrifice of Praise alone remained, as the principal Service of the Christian Church: Several Persons being inspired, not only to pray divinely, but to prophesy also, or to sing Psalms and Hymns of Praise; as we read in the Epistle to 1 Corinthians, XI. 5. XIV. 15, 26. And in the Book of the Revelations, we find the Apostles and Elders thus employed, Revel. IV. 9, 10, 11. in which the People bare a Part; as we learn from the next Chapter, V. 9, 13. and XIV. 1, 2, 3. So that St. Austin might tell Januarius†, that concerning singing Hymns and Psalms, we have Instructions, and Examples, and Precepts, both of our LORD himself, and of his Apostles. According to which, the Churches of Africa sung Divina Cantica Prophetarum, the Divine Songs of the Prophets, while the drunken Donatists sung the Compositures of humane Wit. Nor can I see, saith he, what Christians can do more profitably, and more holily than this, when they meet together, and are not reading, preaching, or praying.

† Epist. CXIX. Cap. 18.

Those Divina Cantica, no doubt, were principally the Psalms of David, in singing of which Christian People delighted above all other Exercises of Devotion.

The Manner of their Singing also was like that in Ezra's Time, Ezr. III. 11. One Beginning the Hymn, and the rest answering the τὰ ἀκροστίχια, Extreams, or last Words of it, as the Author of the Apostolical Constitutions tells us*, which Eusebius calls the ἀντιφωνίαν τῶν ὕμνων, the last Part of the Hymns, which he expresly says were sung by the whole Company; who hearkened in Silence to him that sung the rest, till he came to the Close, which they all repeated together*. And when that Manner of singing the Psalms, which we now use in our Quires, was brought in by Flavianus and Diodorus, (who at Antioch divided the Chore into two Parts, singing the Psalms of David, ἀντιφώνως, alternately, one Verse by this half of the Quire, and the next by the other) it thence spread it self, as it were, by a joynt Consent, all the World over. Thus Theodoret informs us in his Ecclesiastical History, Book II. Chap. 19.

* L. II. Cap. 57.

* L. II. Eccl. Hist. Cap. 17.

By which Means the People came to be so well acquainted with them, that (as the same Theodoret tells us in his Preface to this Book of Psalms) both in City and Country this was the Employment of Christian People. They that minded no other Book of the Scriptures, yet had this so by heart, that both in their Houses, and in the Streets, and in the High-ways, they were wont to recreate themselves with the singing of these Holy Songs.

But I must not enlarge any further on this Subject, nor fill this Preface with the high Commendations which the Antients give both of Psalmody, and of this Book of Psalms; which St. Basil (who alone would furnish me with the Sense of all the rest, if it were fit to transcribe his Preface to it) calls the common Treasure of all good Precepts, (containing the Perfections of all the rest of the Scriptures) ταμεῖον κοινὸν, the Voice of the Church, in which may be found θεολογία πᾶσα, a compleat Body of Theology.

Which will make this Paraphrase, I hope, the more acceptable; of which it is Time now that I give an Account.

II.

There being two Ways of Paraphrasing, one which keeps to the Metaphors, and pursues them in more Words of the like Kind; another which puts those borrowed Forms of Speech into proper and common Expressions; I have chosen the latter, and endeavoured, by giving a clear Interpretation, and expressing, as well as I could, the true Force and just Value of every Phrase, to make the Original Words plain and easy in our Language: As may be seen particularly, XVIII. 2. XIX. 8, 9. In which Endeavour it is likely I may sometimes meet with the Censures of those who do not consider the Import of the Hebrew Words; but not be thought much faulty, I hope, by such as can and will consult them; for they will find I have carefully weighed them, and taken some Pains rightly to expound them; not largely, nor making Discourses upon them, but in a few Words representing the Mind and Spirit of the Psalmist in his own Way, which is Devotion. And where there are two Senses of which a Word is capable, they will find likewise that I have endeavoured to express them both, if the Matter would bear it. As for Example, (to name one Place for all)

in

in the CXIX. Psal. 126. *where we read,* It is Time for thee, O LORD, to work: for they have made void thy Law: *I have expounded it thus*; It is Time to work to the LORD; *or* for the LORD, *&c. because all the ancient Interpreters, except one, have so understood them; yet I have not neglected the other Sense, which we follow, but made them agree well together. I have preferred indeed, the first Interpretation, not only for the Reason now named, but because the Words run most currently so in the* Hebrew: *and the best of the* Jews *have expounded them in that Manner.* Maimonides *for Instance, who says this was one Argument that moved him to write his famous Book, called* Moreh Nevochim: *Which some might account an audacious Attempt, because never undertaken, he saith*, by any of their Nation since this long Captivity, (as he calls it) but he supported himself with this Principle; that it is said concerning such Sort of Matters,* It is Time to do something for the LORD: they having made void thy Law. *And in like Manner* David Ganz, *in his Chronology says* †, *that* R. Judah Hakodesh, *observing their* Oral Law, *or Traditional Religion, in Danger to be lost, set it down in Writing, though there was a Prohibition against it: For* סמר על התכתוב *the Rabbi relied upon this Scripture (thinking it would bear him out)* It is Time to work to the LORD, *&c. which he expounded to this Sense; Now that the Law by Word of Mouth is like to be forgotten and utterly lost, there must be something extraordinary done to uphold it, and so he wrote the* Misneh.

* Præfat. Pag. penult.

† Ad Ann. 3978.

I have sometimes also followed Theodoret, *in the Explication of some Phrases; which I think good to signify, that none may be too forward to censure that for which I have a good Authority at least, if not a weighty Reason. As for Example,* Psal. LXXXIX. ver. 13. *I have grounded my Paraphrase upon his Notion, That as the* Hand of GOD *denotes the divine Energy, so* his Right Hand *signifies his Energy for good. And therefore they then needing a double Energy, the Psalmist remembers both* his Hand, *and* his right Hand; *desiring to see their Enemies destroyed, and themselves delivered.*

And if the Readers will please to take the Pains to compare the Text, with the References I have made (and enclosed) in the Paraphrase, to other Scriptures; they will easily see (especially if they have any Understanding in the Original Language) that I have not followed my own Fancy in my Interpretation, but had good Reason for expounding the Text as I have done in such Places: and that this Paraphrase *may serve, in many Places, instead of a larger* Commentary *upon the Words. As for Example,* Psal. CXLVII. 19. his Words, *I think, plainly relate to the* Ten *Words spoken on Mount* Sinai; *as I might have shewn, if I intended to write* Annotations.

Which if I had undertaken, it would not perhaps have been wholly a superfluous Labour; but I might have produced something new, as I think I have done in this Paraphrase; *else I should not have attempted it, especially after such an excellent Person as Dr.* Hammond. *For therein I have interpreted some Phrases otherwise than they have been understood: of which I think good here to give one Example. The* Son of Man, *and the* Sons of Men*, *are Phrases which often occur; which I have good Ground to think belong in the Scripture Language to* Princes; *and sometimes the* greatest of Princes. *So I have expounded that known Place,* Psal. LXXX. 17. The Man of thy right Hand, the Son of Man, whom Thou madest strong for thy self; *and* Psal. IV. 2. O ye Sons of Men, i. e. *Rulers of People; and* VIII. 3. What is Man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, (i. e. *the greatest of Men*) that Thou visitest him? CXLVI. 3. Put not your Confidence in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, *(how great a Prince, that is, soever he may be, though of never such Dignity and Power)* in whom there is no Help.

* Ben Adam *and* bene Ish.

And thus the Counsellers of Saul, *are called the* Sons of Men, LVIII. 1. *and so I understand those Words in* Isa. LI. 12. Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a Man that shall die, and of the SON OF MAN, *(that is a Prince)* who shall be as Grass? *where, upon the Words that go before,* I am He that comforteth you, Theodoret *hath this Note; I am He that cast* Pharaoh *and his Army into the Sea; He who killed many Thousands of the* Assyrians *by one Angel. From which I conclude, that he understood the following Words thus; Why dost thou then fear any Man, though he be never so great a Tyrant, and armed with never so much Power? as the King of* Babylon *then was, whom he calls an* Oppressor *presently after, who carried them Captive from their own Land.*

Thus in the Title of the IX. Psalm, the Septuagint, *for* Labben *read* על בן; *and so do* Symmachus, Aquila, *and* Theodotian, *as* Theodoret *there observes: the former of which makes it a triumphal Song, for the Death of* that Son; *which most Interpreters, as I have there observed, conclude to have been that great Man* Goliah. *The Original of which Language, I conceive, is to be fetch'd from the common Manner of Speech among the Hebrews, who call the Chief of any Kind, by the Name of the whole Kind. As they call Man* Creature, Mark XVI. 15. *because the prime Creature here below: so a King, or eminent Person, they call* the Son of Man, *because the prime among the Sons of Men. Thus St.* Peter, 1 Pet. II. 13. *calls Magistrates,* humane Creatures; *where the* Syriack *translates,* Sons of Men, *i. e. Great Men, or Governours. And so* Man *is used,* Gen. IX. 6. *for a Man in Authority. But all this is to be understood of that Expression,* ben Adam: *as for* ben Enoh, *which we also render* Son of Man, *(Psal.* CXLIV. 3.*) it hath another Signification; importing the Wretchedness of any Man's Condition. And if that had been the Name whereby the Angel salutes* Ezekiel, *it might have been to put him in Mind of his mean Condition, though conversing with heavenly*

Mini-

Miniſters. But he conſtantly calling him ben Adam, *I ſee no Reaſon why we ſhould not think it denotes him to be a* great Man, *highly eſteemed by* God; *and appointed by him to judge and paſs Sentence upon his People,* Ezek. XX. 4. *And in like Manner* Daniel *is called* Son of Son, Dan. VIII. 17. *who in the next Chapters hath the Title of a* Man greatly beloved, IX. 23. X. 11.

And by the Way, I may obſerve, that from hence we may learn what to underſtand by that Title, which our Bleſſed Saviour ſo often gives himſelf; of ὁ υἱὸς τῦ ἀνθρώπυ, the Son of Man, *or rather* that Son of Man; *that is, the* Meſſiah, *the Lord's Anointed,* that great Prince, God *promiſed to bleſs them withal. It can have no other meaning in* John V. 22, 27. *(where he ſaith,* God *hath committed all Judgment unto him, and given him Authority to execute it,* becauſe he is the Son, or that Son of Man) *than this; that he is that great Perſon, whom* God *deſigned to be the Lord, and Governour of all Things. So he appeared to be, when he ſent the* Holy Ghoſt; *which ſeems to be called* the Coming of the Son of Man, Matth. X. 23. *Where he ſays, they ſhall not have gone over the Cities of* Iſrael, till the Son of Man come: *by the Power, that is, of the Holy Ghoſt, to enable them, and give them Authority to go and preach him, in all other Countries as well as there, to be the great Lord of all.*

But inſtead of ſuch Annotations as theſe, which the World is already well furniſhed withal, (particularly by the Learned Dr. Hammond *upon this Book) I have onely in the Argument to each Pſalm, given a brief Account now and then of ſome Difficulties; and both there, and in the Paraphraſe it ſelf, pointed to ſuch Parts of the* Hiſtory of David, *or others, as I thought the Pſalms have a Reſpect unto. Which I have followed ſo cloſely, as to wave other Expoſitions, when I thought I ſaw clear Warrant to accommodate them to that. For, in my Judgment, (to uſe the Words of that good Man* Muſculus, *upon the CXXXII.* Pſal. v. 9.) It is the Duty of every pious Perſon, as much as he is able, to prefer that Expoſition, which is approved by moſt Teſtimonies of the Holy Scriptures, before all others whatſoever, tho' in Show and Appearance never ſo plauſible.

For this Reaſon I have forborn a great many myſtical, and allegorical Senſes of the Words, and rather adhered to the literal meaning, though accounted trivial and vulgar by many Men; who had rather indulge to their own Fancies, than be at the Pains of making a diligent Inquiry after the Truth. For, whatſoever is pretended, it is not the Eaſineſs and Meanneſs of the literal Senſe, which hath made it be deſpiſed, and been the Cauſe of allegorizing the Scriptures; but the great Difficulty and Labour that is required to the finding of it out, in many Places. St. Hierom *and* St. Auſtin *confeſs as much; who ſpent their younger Tears in* myſtical *Interpretations, as more eaſie Studies; but when they grew old, applied themſelves to Hiſtorical Explanations. Which* St. Hierom *(in his Preface to the Prophet* Obadiah) *confeſſes he did not underſtand, when he wrote upon that Book in his Youth; and, in plain Terms, ingenuouſly acknowledges thoſe* myſtical *Expoſitions were the Work,* puerilis Ingenii, *of his childiſh Wit, at which he bluſht and hanged down his Head, even when others cried them up to the Skies; but the* Hiſtorical *Explications (which then he ſet out) the Work,* maturæ Senectutis, *of his mature Age; when he had at leaſt profited thus far, as to know with* Socrates, *that he was Ignorant. In ſhort, he begins that Preface with the Words of the Apoſtle,* When I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child, I thought as a Child; but when I became a Man, I put away childiſh Things: *and hopes this would excuſe him, for interpreting that Prophet allegorically in the Heat of his Youth; whoſe Hiſtory he did not know.* St. Auſtin *acknowledges as much, in his firſt Volume of* Retractations, *Chap. 18. which I will not tranſcribe, but only ſet down the Words of* Martin Bucer, *one of the firſt Reformers, upon the VI. of* St. Matthew; *where he ſays, that* it would be worth a great deal to the Church; if forſaking Allegories, and other frivolous Devices, which are not only empty, but derogate very much from the Majeſty of the Doctrine of Christ, we would all ſimply, and ſoberly, proſecute that which our Lord intends to ſay to us.

This hath been my Rule, though I have not ſo followed (I muſt add) the ſtrict literal Senſe, as to make a mere Judaical Paraphraſe (which Theodoret *complains, in his Preface to this Book, was the Fault of ſome that went before him) but have improved the Words, in all Places, to a ſublimer Senſe, where I had any Direction from our Saviour, or his Apoſtles, to apply them to the Things belonging to* Christ's *Kingdom. But where I wanted their Guidance, I have not taken upon me to do it (unleſs it be very ſparingly, where the Church hath thought it probable there was ſomething intended beyond the Letter) becauſe I did not know whether the Holy Ghoſt, which indited the Words, had Reſpect to theſe Times; as well as to thoſe Hiſtories, to which I thought I ſaw a clear Warrant to apply them.*

And where there is no Title *to the Pſalm (which* St. Hierom, *or one under his Name, calls the* Key, *to let us into the Senſe of it) it is not eaſie to tell to what Hiſtory it relates: but muſt be acknowledged to be* ἔργον μέγιστον, &c. *(as* Origen *upon the firſt Pſalm* [a] *ſpeaks from ſome learned Hebrew) a Work of very great Labour, to find the Keys which lie ſcattered up and down in ſeveral Parts of the Scripture; and then to fit them to the Places which they are to open. In this I have taken ſome Pains, as may be ſeen in the Arguments to the ſeveral Pſalms; in ſome of which if I differ from thoſe that have gone before me, I hope none will be ſo perverſe as to make it a Fault: For (as the true* St. Hierom *ſpeaks in his Preface to the Pſalms,* according to the Hebrew Verity) *ſince they are ſtill deſiring new Pleaſures, and the neighbouring Seas cannot ſatisfie Mens Gluttony,* cur in ſolo ſtudio Scripturarum, veteri ſapore contenti ſunt? *Why in the Study of the Scriptures*

[a] Philocalia, Cap. 1.

tures alone, can they reliſh nothing that is new; but content themſelves merely with that which taſts of Antiquity? Which I do not ſpeak, as he proceeds, to reflect upon my Predeceſſors, or detract from their excellent Labours (to which I thankfully acknowledge, I am exceedingly beholden) not only to give an Account to the Readers of what I have done; that they may not think I have only tranſcribed what I found before ſaid in this Argument, and brought no further Light to it.

Why, may ſome be forward to ſay, do you pretend, after ſo many Monuments of Learning, both ancient and modern, to bring forth any Thing which hath not been ſaid before, and ſaid better? I anſwer, as Muſculus *doth in the like Caſe*. If the Treaſure of the Holy Scriptures be ſuch, that it can be drawn ſo dry by the diligent Searches of pious and learned Men, as nothing ſhall remain to exerciſe the Studies of thoſe that ſucceed them; if there be at any Time ſuch an Effuſion of* God's *Holy Spirit, that after that Time it is in vain to labour in finding out its Mind in the Holy Scriptures; if there have been in the Church, after the Prophets,* Christ, *and his Apoſtles, Men of ſuch perfect Accompliſhments, that to them was imparted ſuch an univerſal Fulneſs of divine Knowledge, as to make their Writings abſolutely compleat, ſo that we need do nothing but Night and Day ſtudy them alone; then truly I refuſe not the Cenſure of Folly, nay of Madneſs, for attempting any Thing now in the Holy Scriptures, after ſuch abſolute Writers. But if that moſt rich Fountain of the divine Oracles be altogether inexhauſtible, and no Age can be aſſigned, to which alone the Grace of the Holy Spirit was confined; and there were never any Doctors at any Time in the Church, after* Christ, *the Apoſtles, and Prophets, of ſuch Eſteem, that nothing is wanting in their Writings, nothing can be rightly added to them, nothing is in them, which may be juſtly taken away, or changed for the better; then I do not ſee why we may not profitably travel in the ſame Way that others have done, with Hopes of adding more Light to that which they have left us.*

It is better, indeed, if a Man only conſults his own worldly Eaſe and Tranquillity, not to trouble himſelf at all about ſuch Studies; but to get a Reputation merely by cenſuring thoſe that are thus employed. But if a Man look upon himſelf as conſecrated to the Service of Christ, *and ſeek not what he thinks will pleaſe himſelf, ſo much as what will pleaſe his Maſter* Christ, *and from him alone expect his Reward, he will not think fit to be diſcouraged, in ſuch Endeavours, by the Hatred, or the unkind Cenſures which they may procure him; no, nor by the Senſe neither of his own Infirmities, and the Lapſes he may have in ſuch Writings. Which all truly good Men will pardon, when they ſee an honeſt Diligence in us to do as well as we can; and when they remember that no one Man can do all Things, nor nothing ſo as to need no Correction.*

* Præfat. ad Lectorem.

Submitting therefore this Work, ſuch as it is, to the Correction and Amendment of thoſe that are better able, and ſhall hereafter labour in this Argument, I commend it to the Peruſal of devout Chriſtians; hoping that the Light I have given to this admirable Book is ſo clear, if not great, that they will, by God's *Bleſſing, receive no ſmall Benefit by it. For there is nothing which* David, *or any of the reſt, ſay of themſelves and their Condition, but by an eaſy Accommodation may be made to ſerve every one of our Occaſions, when we are in any Strait, publick or private; or when we have received any remarkable Deliverance.* Athanaſius *hath ſaid much on this Subject, which I muſt not tranſcribe; nor ſhow how they are fitted (as* Gregory Nyſſen * *obſerves) to all Perſons and Ages, to all Conditions of Life, and all Manner of Employments, to the State both of Sickneſs and of Health, when we are upon the Land, or upon the Water, ſo wonderful is their uſeful Variety. But I ſhall conclude this Preface, as* Theodoret *doth his Commentaries upon this Book.*

* L. 1. de Inſcript. Pſal. T. 1. p. 261.

I beſeech the Readers, if I ſeem to have expounded it well and aptly, that they would reap the Profit of it; and if I have not attained the ſecret Myſteries of the Spirit, that they would not find Fault too much; for what I could find I have freely propounded, and what I have learnt of thoſe gone before, I endeavour to tranſmit to Poſterity; and I have taken the Pains, of which others may receive the Benefit without any Labour. Whom I beſeech and entreat to make ſome Compenſation for my Pains, with their Prayers; by the Help of which, I may to Words add Deeds, and reap the Bleſſedneſs which belongs to both. For he that doth and teaches, ſhall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matt.* V. 19.

And let us praiſe the Lord, (*as St.* Chryſoſtome *alſo concludes*) perpetually, *as this Book inſtructs us*; let us never ceaſe to give Thanks in all Things, both by our Words, and by our Deeds. For this is our Sacrifice, this is our Oblation, this is the beſt Liturgy, or divine Service, reſembling the Angelical Manner of Living. If we continue thus ſinging Hymns unto him, we ſhall finiſh this Life inoffenſively, and enjoy thoſe good Things alſo which are to come. Of which, may we all be ſo happy as to be Partakers, through the Grace and Loving Kindneſs of our Lord Jesus Christ: With whom, to the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, be Glory, Dominion, and Honour, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A PARAPHRASE ON THE BOOK of *PSALMS.*

PSALM I.

ARGUMENT.

The Collector of these five *Books of* Psalms, *or* David *himself, (as* Appollinarius *and others think) Prefaces to them by a short Discourse about the last End of Man; just as the Philosophers were wont to do in their Books of Morality; and as* CHRIST *himself doth in the Beginning of his Sermon on the Mount. The End of Man is Blessedness; and the Way to it, Observance of* GOD's *Law; which he lays down here as the Foundation (so St.* Basil *conceives it) of the whole insuing Work. So that we may bestow upon this Psalm the Title of* MAKAPIΣMOΣ, i. e. *BLESSEDNESS, out of* Athanasius *his Epistle to* Marcellinus, *and* Theodoret's *Preface to this Psalm.*

Ver. 1. B*Lessed is the Man that walketh not in the Counsel of the Ungodly, nor standeth in the Way of Sinners, nor sitteth in the Seat of the Scornful.*] Great is the Happiness of that Man, unspeakably great, who hath not trod in the Steps of the Ungodly; (who have no other Rule of their Actions but their own Lusts and Passions;) or, if he hath at any Time been seduced by them, timely retracted his Folly, and did not persist, like those obdurate Wretches, in evil Courses; much less persevered so long, and proceeded so far in his Impiety, as to resolve to be one of that pestilent Company, who deride and scoff at all Religion!

Ver. 2. *But his Delight is in the Law of the* LORD, *and in his Law doth he meditate Day and Night.*] But his Pleasure is to do the Will of GOD, by following his Counsels which he hath given in his holy Laws; with which he advises and consults continually, and with unwearied Study endeavours to be thoroughly acquainted with them.

Ver. 3. *And he shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth his Fruit in his Season; his Leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper.*] You may behold an Emblem of this Man's Happiness, in those Trees which are planted by such Trenches as derive their Water from a perpetual Fountain. As they are green and flourishing all the Year, and never fail to reward the Gardener's Pains, at the Time he expects to receive their Fruit; so shall this pious Man be ever prosperous, and in the Issue reap a plentiful Fruit of his Labours; for there are none of his Enterprizes, but shall succeed according to his Heart's Desire.

Ver. 4. *The Ungodly are not so: But* are *like the Chaff which the Wind driveth away.*] O how miserably will those Men be deceived, who hope to thrive as well, or better, by their Impiety! It is too little to say, that they shall be like Trees without any Moisture; the Light and useless Chaff, which is blown away with the Wind, is a fitter Resemblance of them: For so shall all their Counsels, Designs and Endeavours to root themselves in the Earth, be scattered and come to nothing.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the Ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous.*] Therefore let them not think to defend themselves when GOD comes to judge Men acccording to their Works: for whatsoever Plea they make, or Power they have, they shall certainly be overthrown. It is possible, for the present, they may seem to equal or over-top the Prosperity of the Righteous: But there will be a Time when GOD will make a Difference and give the Righteous a Happiness, wherein they shall have no Share at all.

Ver. 6. *For the* LORD *knoweth the Way of the Righteous: But the Way of the Ungodly shall perish.*] For he approves and highly esteems the Obedience of the Righteous to his holy Laws, and therefore will certainly reward it: But that lewd Course of Life which the Wicked lead, he utterly hates, and they shall infallibly perish in it.

PSALM II.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, under the History of David, *whom from a low and afflicted Condition* GOD *raised to a Throne, and notwithstanding all the Opposition made against it, first, by* Saul, *and then*

then by others, ſettled him in it,) contains a moſt illuſtrious Prophecy of the Kingdom of CHRIST; *whom* GOD *raiſed even from the Dead, made the King of Glory, notwithſtanding all that the* Scribes *and* Phariſees, Herod *and other Princes could do to hinder it, inlarged his Kingdom to the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth.*

PSALM

Ver. 1. WHY *do the Heathen rage, and the People imagine a vain Thing?*] What Frenzy is this, which makes the *Philiſtines*, and other neighbouring Nations, (2 *Sam.* V. 17. *&c.* VIII. 1, *&c.*) as I foreſee the *Phariſees* and their Partakers will do hereafter, ſtorm thus furiouſly, and bandy together with ſo much Noiſe and Tumult? Why do they contrive to hinder that which the Power of GOD will irreſiſtibly bring to paſs?

Ver. 2. *The Kings of the Earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers take Counſel together againſt the* LORD, *and againſt his Anointed*, ſaying,] Their Kings and Governours are riſen up, and lay their Heads together, to oppoſe the Deſign of GOD, who hath anointed me King over his People: Juſt as *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, and the Rulers of *Iſrael*, (*Acts* IV. 27.) will conſpire againſt CHRIST, and ſeek to dethrone him, when he is made, by GOD the Father, King of all the World.

Ver. 3. *Let us break their Bands aſunder, and caſt away their Cords from us.*] Let us not ſubmit, ſay they, to this new King, who pretends to reign by divine Authority; but reſolutely deny to be bound to his Obedience, and throw off the Yoke which he and his Miniſters would impoſe upon us.

Ver. 4. *He that ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh: The* LORD *ſhall have them in Deriſion.*] As if they were ſtronger than he, whoſe Throne is in Heaven: Who, as he contemns their vain Attempts, ſo will expoſe them to the Scorn and Deriſion of all thoſe who ſhall behold their Folly.

Ver. 5. *Then ſhall he ſpeak unto them in his Wrath, and vex them in his ſore Diſpleaſure.*] Even then when they think they have done their Buſineſs, they ſhall find the Tokens of the divine Vengeance againſt them; and if they will not deſiſt from their Oppoſition to him, he will utterly confound them with a Deſtruction ſo terrible and ſo remarkable, as if he had called to them from Heaven, and ſaid,

Ver. 6. *Yet have I ſet my King upon my holy Hill of Zion.*] See how madly you ſet your ſelves againſt my Will; for in Spite of all that you can do, I have anointed and ſet up *David*, who rules by my Authority in the Hill of *Sion*, where I have a peculiar Reſidence: As in Time to come (let all his Enemies do what they can to hinder it) I will anoint one of his Poſterity to ſit upon the Throne of Glory at the right Hand of the Majeſty on High.

Ver. 7. *I will declare the Decree: The* LORD *hath ſaid unto me, Thou* art *my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.*] Such I am ſure is the Decree of Heaven, which I here promulgate to all the World: For from a low and poor Condition, the LORD hath raiſed me to the higheſt Dignity. This very Day, by his Order, I begin to reign, and may call it the Birth-day of my Kingdom: Which is but a ſlender Type of a far more ſtrange and greater Exaltation of his Son CHRIST, whom he hath determined to raiſe again to Life after he is dead and buried, (*Acts* XIII. 33. *Rom.* I. 4.) and then to crown with Glory and Honour in the Heavens.

Ver. 8. *Aſk of me, and I ſhall give* thee *the Heathen* for *thine Inheritance, and the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth for thy Poſſeſſion.*] If you will not believe this royal Edict, you ſhall ſhortly ſee not only this Nation of the *Jews*, but the *Philiſtians*, the *Edomites*, *Moabites*, *Syrians*, and other remoter Countreys as far as *Euphrates*, (whom GOD, according to his ancient Grant, *Exod.* XXIII. 31. *Ezra* IV. 16, 20. hath at my Requeſt given unto me,) ſubdued under my Feet: (*Pſalm* LX. *v.* 6, *&c.* 2 *Sam.* VIII.) As all the Nations of the Earth ſhall be under his Son CHRIST.

Ver. 9. *Thou ſhalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou ſhalt daſh them in Pieces like a Potter's Veſſel.*] They ſhall never be able to ſtand before me: (much leſs before him:) For he hath given me a Scepter ſo powerful, (and to him, one infinitely more irreſiſtible) that they who will not bow unto it, and be ruled by it, ſhall be broken in Pieces as eaſily and irreparably, as an earthen Pot is with a Rod of Iron.

Ver. 10. *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings: Be inſtructed, ye Judges of the Earth.*] And therefore let all Kings and Governours of the Earth be adviſed by me; take heed what you do, and underſtand your own Intereſt ſo well, as not to oppoſe the Decree of Heaven; or if you have begun to ſet your ſelves againſt the LORD's Anointed, be not ſo vain as to continue in that Folly, but repent, and correct your Error.

Ver. 11. *Serve the* LORD *with Fear, and rejoice with trembling.*] If you would be ſafe, ſurrender up your ſelves to become his Subjects, and be afraid to incur his Diſpleaſure by any Diſobedience. You ought indeed to rejoice, that you may be ſo happy, as to be under the Government of ſo great and ſo gracious a Prince; but that very Thing ſhould make you the more fearful to offend his Majeſty.

Ver. 12. *Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the Way, when his Wrath is kindled but a little: Bleſſed* are *all they that put their Truſt in him.*] To whom I counſel you to go and do your Homage, and to pay him all the Honour that is due to GOD's Vicegerent; leſt he grow angry at your obſtinate Refuſal to ſubmit unto him, and you periſh in that rebellious Courſe, when his Wrath breaks out ſuddenly, like an unquenchable Fire againſt you. Bleſſed are all they that follow this Advice, and fly to him as their mighty Protector and Deliverer.

PSALM

PSALM III.

A Psalm of *David*, when he fled from *Absalom* his Son.

ARGUMENT.

Appollinarius *calls this* Ανγε'ν υιλ&, *a mournful or lamentable Song. And so it is, if compared with the precedent; otherwise there are in it far greater Expressions of Faith and triumphant Confidence in* God, *than there are of Trouble and Dejection of Spirit, though* David's *Condition when he wrote it was very sad and dangerous. For the Title (which St.* Hierom *truly calls the* Key of the Psalm, *whereby we are let into the Sense) informs us, that it is a Meditation composed in his Flight from* Jerusalem, *when his Son* Absalom *conspired against him, and most of the Kingdom fell off from him,* (2 Sam. *XV.* &c.) *Which after his Return thither he commanded to be sung in the Tabernacle, in Commemoration of that disconsolate Condition.*

And here I must note once for all, that it cannot be certainly known what is meant by the Word SELAH, *which we meet withal thrice in this short Psalm. The most probable Opinion is, that it was a Note in Musick. In which* David (*as* Theodoret *observes upon this Word) being a very great Master, he set some of his Psalms himself, to be sung to such Instruments as he thought were most agreeable to the Notes. But that Musick being now lost, some Interpreters have wholly omitted this Word* Selah, *as I shall also do.*

Ver. 1. LORD, *how are they increased that trouble me? Many are they that rise up against me.*] O Lord, who changest not, what an amazing Change is this! I, who in a divine Manner was set by thee upon thy Throne, and lately triumph'd over so many foreign Countries, (*Psal.* II. 6, 7, 8.) now see great Armies of my own Subjects raised against me; and conspiring with my Son, not only to pull the Crown from my Head, but to take away my Life.

Ver. 2. *Many* there be *which say of my Soul,* There is *no Help for him in* God. *Selah.*] The general Cry is, that I am lost, and that thou who wast wont to be my Helper, and in whom I always made my Boast, hast quite forsaken me, as my People have done universally.

Ver. 3. *But thou, O* Lord, art *a Shield for me: My Glory, and the Lifter up of mine Head.*] But this (how sad soever it be) shall never shake my Confidence in thee, O Lord, whom I still behold surrounding me with thy almighty Protection: And therefore I will not cease to glory, and make my Boast in thee; but hope (though now I am in a sorrowful Condition) that thou wilt make me joyful again, and raise me out of this dejected Estate to my former Dignity.

Ver. 4. *I cried unto the* Lord *with my Voice, and he heard me out of his holy Hill. Selah.*] Why should I doubt of it? When I never yet cried unto the Lord, either in this or any former Distress, but he sent me Relief from that Place, where he having made his special Residence, would have us thither direct our Prayers.

Ver. 5. *I laid me down and slept; I awaked for the* Lord *sustained me.*] He hath already so quieted and composed my Mind, that in the midst of this dreadful Danger, I laid me down securely, and slept profoundly, and awaked, as I slept, without any Fear, or any Disturbance: For the Lord supported and upheld my Spirit, in a firm Confidence of his careful Providence over me.

Ver. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten Thousand of People, that have set* themselves *against me round about.*] And therefore, were I beset with as many Nations, as I see Men now encamp themselves on all sides against me, I should not be at all daunted at it.

Ver. 7. *Arise, O* Lord, *save me, O my* God: *For thou hast smitten all mine Enemies* upon *the Cheek-bone: Thou hast broken the Teeth of the Ungodly.*] But only address my self to thee, saying, defer no longer, O Lord, but let them see thou hast not forsaken me. Deliver me, O my God, from these rebellious Subjects, whom I beseech thee to discomfit and put to Shame, as thou hast done many other powerful Enemies, who most impiously have sought with eager Desire to devour me.

Ver. 8. *Salvation* belongeth *unto the* Lord: *Thy Blessing* is *upon thy People. Selah.*] Thou alone art the Author of all Happiness, and therefore unto thee I flee to save and preserve me from this Conspiracy: Not that I may live to be revenged, but to do good unto thy People, whose Prosperity I wish and will seek, though never so ungrateful and unductiful to me their Sovereign.

PSALM IV.

To the chief Musician upon *Neginoth.* A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

We can learn no more from this Title, but that David *was the Author of this Psalm; and that he delivered it to the Master of Musick in the Tabernacle, to be sung to the stringed Instruments. But when or upon what Occasion he penned it, is not certainly known, though the Matter of it makes it probable, it was in the same (or the like) Distress, wherein he made the foregoing Psalm.*

Ver. 1. HEar me when *I call, O* God *of my Righteousness: Thou hast enlarged me* when *I was in Distress, have Mercy upon me, and hear my Prayer.*] O my God, the most righteous Judge, who knowest the Justice of my Cause, and art the Protector of oppressed Innocence, vouchsafe to give me a gracious

Anſwer now that I cry unto thee for Help againſt my Enemies. Thou haſt heretofore made an open Way for my Eſcape out of the ſoreſt Straits and greateſt Dangers; which makes me hope thou wilt ſtill take Pity upon me, and hear the humble Petition which I put up unto thee.

Ver. 2. *O ye Sons of Men, how long* will ye turn *my Glory into Shame?* How long *will ye love Vanity,* and *ſeek after leaſing? Selah.*] I am confident my Deſire is granted; and therefore do you hearken alſo to me, O ye Rulers of the People, by whoſe Authority ſuch Multitudes are drawn into this Conſpiracy: Ceaſe to defame my Government, (2 *Sam.* XV. 3. &c.) and break off your vain Endeavours to dethrone me. Why do you delight to weary your ſelves in the Purſuit of ſuch fallacious Counſels, and to employ ſo much Induſtry in inventing Calumnies, and ſpreading Lyes to draw the People from me?

Ver. 3. *But know that the* LORD *hath ſet apart him that is godly for himſelf: The* LORD *will hear when I call unto him.*] Know that it is not in your Power by all theſe Arts to depoſe me; for I did not come to my Kingdom by Chance, nor by your Choice, but by the ſpecial Appointment of GOD; who having ſo highly favoured me, that he hath ſelected me out of all other Men, and in a wonderful Manner advanced me to be his Vicegerent; he will no doubt maintain me in my Place, and graciouſly preſerve me, when I implore his Help from all the Enemies that can aſſault me.

Ver. 4. *Stand in Awe, and ſin not: Commune with your own Heart upon your Bed, and be ſtill. Selah.*] Dread his Diſpleaſure, I beſeech you, though you fear not my Power; and let not your Anger at me make you any longer offend him, by perſiſting in this Rebellion, into which you have run raſhly: But if you will debate the Matter calmly within your ſelves, and, when all the Buſtle and Tumult of the Day is over, ask your ſelves at Night, what Ground there is for it; I doubt not you will find Reaſon to lay down your Arms, and be quiet.

Ver. 5. *Offer the Sacrifices of Righteouſneſs, and put your Truſt in the* LORD.] As for you, my Friends, that adhere ſtill to me, though you are driven with me from GOD's holy Place, yet fear nothing; but only take Care to obſerve ſtrictly all the Rules of Righteouſneſs, which are the moſt acceptable Sacrifices you can offer to the LORD; and then confide in him; and tho' our Forces be few, doubt not of the Victory.

Ver. 6. There be *many that ſay, Who will ſhew us* any *Good?* LORD, *lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.*] You are deſirous, I know, to ſee Peace and Settlement reſtored; of which many are apt to deſpair, ſaying, Who ſhall make us ſo happy? But do thou, O LORD, look favourably upon us and bleſs us, and then I am ſurer of it, than if I ſaw the moſt powerful Armies appear, with Banners diſplayed, for my Succour.

Ver. 7. *Thou haſt put Gladneſs in my Heart, more than in the Time* that *their Corn and their Wine encreaſed.*] The very Thoughts of it, this ſmall Glimpſe of thy Love hath already filled my Heart with ſuch Joy, that it far exceeds all the Pleaſure my Enemies can take in ſeeing their Barns full of Corn, and their Preſſes overflow with Wine.

Ver. 8. *I will both lay me down in Peace, and ſleep: For thou,* LORD, *only makeſt me dwell in Safety.*] Nor can they take their Reſt more ſecurely than I; for tho' encompaſſed with theſe Dangers, I no ſooner lay me down, but I fall aſleep; becauſe when I have no other Guard about me, thou, LORD, alone art a ſufficient Defence unto me.

PSALM V.

To the chief Muſician upon *Nehiloth.* A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by David, *(but whether when he was perſecuted by* Saul *or by* Abſalom, *I cannot certainly determine) and delivered to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle, after his Troubles were over, to be ſung in Parts to the Organ; in Commemoration of that ſad Condition, and the devout Confidence he placed in* GOD *of Deliverance out of it.*

Ver. 1. *GIVE Ear to my Words; O* LORD, *conſider my Meditation.*] Thou ſeeſt, O LORD, unto what grievous Straits I am reduced: Let them move thee to grant me my Requeſt, and to have Regard to the ſilent Groans and Sighs, whereby I call upon thee for Relief.

Ver. 2. *Hearken unto the Voice of my Cry, my King and my* GOD: *For unto thee will I pray.*] To thee I appeal as my Sovereign LORD and ſupreme Judge; from whoſe almighty Power I earneſtly beg Protection, and from whoſe Juſtice I humbly implore the Vindication of my Innocence.

Ver. 3. *My Voice ſhalt thou hear in the Morning O* LORD; *in the Morning, will I direct* my Prayer *unto thee, and will look up.*] And thou wilt be as ſpeedy, I hope, in thy Help and Succour, as I am early in my Prayer: For the firſt Thing I do is, to addreſs my ſelf to thee. I no ſooner awake, but I diſpoſe my ſelf to wait on thee (as an humble Suitor at the Gate of thy Mercy,) and expect what thou wilt be pleaſed to do for me.

Ver. 4. *For thou* art *not a* GOD *that hath Pleaſure in Wickedneſs: Neither ſhall Evil dwell with thee.*] Who wilt not fail, I am confident, to anſwer my Expectations; for thou art a moſt righteous Judge, who art ſo far from approving this unjuſt Perſecution of me, (or Rebellion againſt me,) that thou abhorreſt ſuch wicked Practices. They may proſper for a little Time in theſe evil Courſes, but ſhall have no Place in thy Favour.

Ver. 5. *The Fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy Sight: thou hateſt all Workers of Iniquity.*] Thou wilt condemn them to ſuffer the Puniſhment of their Folly and Madneſs; and baniſh thoſe from

from thy Presence, who in their blind Rage have driven me from my Habitation: For all such wicked Doers are odious to thee.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the* LORD *will abhor the bloody and deceitful Man.*] Thou wilt utterly destroy those that abuse their Tongues to tell Lyes, whereby they defame and calumniate my Government: Their bloody Designs, which they seek to compass by Fraud and Treachery, make them abominable to the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 7. *But as for me, I will come into thy House, in the Multitude of thy Mercy: and in thy Fear will I worship toward thy holy Temple.*] But I, whom they have driven not only from my own House, but (which is far worse) from thine, hope, by thine infinite Goodness towards me, to be restored again to go into thy Courts; and there, with the humblest Reverence, to worship thee, towards the Place where thou hast set the Monument of thy Presence with us.

Ver. 8. *Lead me, O* LORD, *in thy Righteousness, because of mine Enemies: make thy Way streight before my Face.*] And in the mean Time, thou wilt be my Guide and Conduster in the Way of thy Commandments, which are the Rule of Righteousness; that my Enemies, who seek for something to colour their Hatred to me, may have nothing to object against me. They would gladly see me trip, and they watch for my halting: and therefore do thou make thy Way so plain before me, and order my Goings so stedfastly, that I may never stumble, much less fall, and give them any Advantage over me.

Ver. 9. *For* there is *no Faithfulness in their Mouth, their inward Part* is *very Wickedness; their Throat* is *an open Sepulchre, they flatter with their Tongue.*] For with what Triumph would they blaze abroad my real Faults, who now stick not to tell all manner of Lyes of me? Their Hearts are perpetually hatching the most malicious and mischievous Stories, which they utter with open Mouth, gaping for the Destruction of the Innocent: to whom when they speak fair, and put on a Guise of Friendship, it is with an Intent to devour them.

Ver. 10. *Destroy thou them, O* GOD; *let them fall by their own Counsels: cast them out in the Multitude of their Transgressions, for they have rebelled against thee.*] O thou most righteous Judge, pronounce that Sentence of Condemnation against them which they deserve. Let their own Devices, whereby they seek to ruine me, destroy themselves; and disperse them, because of their multiplied Impieties. For it is thy Cause more than mine which is now disputed, while they reject him whom thou hast appointed the King of thy People.

Ver. 11. *But let all those that put their Trust in thee rejoyce; let them ever shout for Joy, because thou defendest them; let them also that love thy Name be joyful in thee.*] This will excite all those who are faithful to thee; and confide in nothing but thy merciful Protection, to rejoyce and triumph perpetually in thy Praise. They will be incouraged by thy wonderful Goodness and Power appearing in my Deliverance, to hope thou wilt protect and succour them also; and never fail to fill the Hearts of all those that truly love thee, with the highest Joy in thee.

Ver. 12. *For thou,* LORD, *wilt bless the righteous; with Favour wilt thou compass him as with a Shield.*] For thou, LORD, who art faithful and true, hast engaged thy self, by thy gracious Promise, to do good unto the Righteous: whom thou lovest and delightest in; and therefore wilt crown with thy Favour, and incircle him, as with an impenetrable Shield, against all the Darts of his Enemies.

PSALM VI.

To the Chief Musician on *Neginoth* upon *Sheminith.* A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

When David *laboured under some grievous Disease, he made his Complaints to* GOD, *and deprecated his Displeasure, according to the Sense of this Psalm. Which he composed, it is likely, after his Recovery; and ordered the Master of Musick in the Tabernacle, to cause it to be sung to the Harp of eight Strings. That seems to be the best Interpretation of* Sheminith, *which the* Chaldee *follows; and it may be justified from what we read,* 1 Chron. *Chap. XV. v.* 21. *Of* Neginoth, *see* Psalm *IV. By Way of Accommodation, the Words of this Psalm have been applied to the Sickness of the Mind; but upon the former Account also it may be called one of the Penitential Psalms.*

Ver. 1. O LORD, *rebuke me not in thine Anger, neither chasten me in thy hot Displeasure.*] O LORD, who delightest in Mercy, moderate, I beseech Thee, thy sharp Correction; and do not proceed to inflict upon me the severest Marks of thy Displeasure.

Ver. 2. *Have Mercy upon me, O* LORD, *for I am weak: O* LORD *heal me, for my Bones are vexed.*] I am brought very low already, my Strength faileth me, and every Joint in my Body trembles; and therefore now, O LORD, thy Mercy will come very seasonably. Good LORD, from whom alone I expect a Cure, let it be sufficient that I have suffered so much already, and vouchsafe to heal me.

Ver. 3. *My Soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O* LORD, *how long?*] For this sore Affliction, and the Dread of thy farther Displeasure, have struck into my Soul also an exceeding great Consternation: and how long it will continue, thou, LORD, alone knowest.

Ver. 4. *Return, O* LORD, *deliver my Soul: oh save me for thy Mercies Sake.*] My Enemies think thou hast quite forsaken me: Convince them of their Errour, O LORD, by being reconciled, and restoring to me the Kindness thou wast wont to shew me. Deliver me from this Anguish and Fear, and (though not for my Merits, yet) for thy Mercy save me from going down into the Grave.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *For in Death* there is *no Remembrance of thee: in the Grave who ſhall give thee Thanks?*] For there I can have no Opportunity to do thee Service; the Dead being utterly unable to commemorate thy wonderful Works, and propagate the Memory of them to Poſterity. As long as I live I will ſhew forth thy Praiſe; but who can celebrate thy Name, and inſtruct thy People in the Grave?

Ver. 6. *I am weary with my Groaning; all the Night make I my Bed to ſwim: I water my Couch with my Tears.*] To that ſilent Place I ſhall ſoon deſcend, unleſs thou makeſt Haſte to deliver me; for I am tired out with theſe Pains under which I groan. The Night, which is wont to quiet all Men's Grief, and lay their Troubles aſleep, is to me ſo reſtleſs and uneaſie, that the inceſſant Agonies I am in, diſſolve me into Sweat; and I do nothing but pour out Floods of Tears.

Ver. 7. *Mine Eye is conſumed becauſe of Grief; it waxeth old, becauſe of all mine Enemies.*] Which have made ſuch Furrows in my Face, that my Countenance hath loſt all its Beauty, and looks like that of a conſumptive Man, who is dropping into his Grave. I am worn away with the mere Grief and Indignation of ſeeing all mine Enemies inſulting over me, and with Joy waiting for my Death.

Ver. 8. *Depart from me, all ye Workers of Iniquity; for the* LORD *hath heard the Voice of my weeping.*] But why am I thus concern'd at their Behaviour; and torment my ſelf, as if my Life depended on their Pleaſure; which is in the Hand of GOD alone; who pities my mournful Condition, and will grant me that which I have ſought with ſo many Tears? And therefore go your Way, ye Evil-doers, and ſtay no longer here expecting my Death. Deſiſt from all your wicked Contrivances againſt me, and be not ſo vain as to hope to triumph over me.

Ver. 9. *The* LORD *hath heard my Supplication; the* LORD *will receive my Prayer.*] The LORD hath not rejected me, as you imagine; but is graciouſly pleaſed, both with my Deprecation of his Diſpleaſure, and with my Petitions to him for his Favour.

Ver. 10. *Let all mine Enemies be aſhamed and ſore vexed: let them return and be aſhamed ſuddenly.*] And therefore I tell my Enemies once more, that they ſhall all be aſhamed of their vain Hopes to ſee me dead. I ſhall live to diſappoint them, and make them terribly afraid: nay, they ſhall make a ſudden Retreat, and be confounded to ſee themſelves ſo ſhamefully defeated.

PSALM VII.

Shiggaion of *David*, which he ſang unto the LORD, concerning the Words (or Buſineſs) of *Cuſh* the *Benjamite*.

ARGUMENT.

An excellent Pſalm, compoſed by David *to commemorate the Loving-kindneſs of the* LORD *upon Occaſion of ſome Calumnies and falſe Accuſations; wherein* Cuſh, *one of the ſame Tribe with* Saul, *(and probably one of his Courtiers or Captains, if not one of his Kinſmen) had charged* David *with ſome very great Crime; of Treaſon, it is likely, and Conſpiracy againſt* Saul. Athanaſius *indeed (as we find in ſome Fragments of his upon the* Pſalms) *thinks that* David *made this* χαιρεδιον ᾠδην, *as he calls it, when* Huſhai *(whom he takes for* Cuſh) *had defeated the good Counſel of* Ahitophel, *by a Diſcourſe he made to ſhew it was not ſafe to ſet upon ſo warlike a Prince as* David, *without a greater Force than* Abſalom *had at preſent; whereby he ſaved* David *from certain Ruin. But I ſee nothing in the Pſalm to give a Colour to this Conjecture; for the* WORDS *therein mentioned were againſt* David, *not in his Favour. The Name of* Huſhai *alſo is otherways written, and he is called an* Archite, *not a* Benjamite; *which St.* Baſil *(whoſe Opinion this was) endeavours to ſalve, by ſaying he was called* Benjemeni, *becauſe he managed his Matters ſo dextrouſly, in overthrowing the Counſel of* Ahitophel. *But that is only a Piece of Wit; and the Conjecture of* Valentine Schindler *ſeems to me more probable; that by* Cuſh *he ſecretly notes (by a Change of Letters)* Saul *himſelf, the Son of* Kiſh; *who could no more alter his Mind, full of Hatred to* David, *than a Man of* Cuſh, *or an* Æthiopian, *could his Skin or Complexion.*

Ver. 1. O LORD *my* GOD, *in thee do I put my Truſt: ſave me from all them that perſecute me, and deliver me.*] O LORD, who haſt hitherto been my moſt gracious GOD, and defended my Innocence againſt thoſe that have falſly accuſed me, I ought not to doubt of thy continued Care and Love towards me: and therefore fly unto thee, with a humble Confidence in thy Almighty Goodneſs, that thou wilt preſerve and deliver me from this new Perſecution which is raiſed againſt me.

Ver. 2. *Leſt he tear my Soul like a Lion, rending* it *in Pieces while* there is *none to deliver.*] For if thou doſt not protect me, I am no more able to ſtand before *Saul*, than a Lamb before a Lion: So great is his Power, and ſo implacable his Rage, that if thou ſuffereſt me to fall into his Hands, there is no Creature can reſcue me, but he will infallibly deſtroy me.

Ver. 3. *O* LORD *my* GOD, *if I have done this; if there be Iniquity in my Hands;*] And let him deſtroy me, O LORD, if I be guilty of that whereof I am accuſed. Thou art the moſt righteous Judge of all, and to thee I here again moſt ſolemnly appeal, (as I have done before him, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 12, 15.) deſiring that thou wilt judge between us. If I have conſpired againſt him, or had any Deſign to do him hurt (as he was made to believe, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 9.) if any ſuch Thing hath ſo much as entred into my Thoughts:

Ver. 4. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at Peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without Cauſe is mine Enemy.)*]

If

If I have either injured him, when he was kind to me, or ſought to be revenged of him ſince he has injured me: (No, I abhorr'd to take Revenge, ſo far was I from ſeeking it, when he fell into my Hand, and ſpared him twice when it was in my Power to have killed him, who cauſeleſly endeavoured to kill me, 1 *Sam.* XXIV, XXVI.)

Ver. 5. *Let the Enemy perſecute my Soul, and take* it: *Yea, let him tread down my Life upon the Earth, and lay mine Honour in the Duſt. Selah.*] Then I beg no Mercy; let him go on to be my Enemy; let him purſue me till he apprehend me, and execute his Deſire upon me. I refuſe not to die; nay, to be trod under Foot like Dirt, with the greateſt Contempt; and to be as much reproached when I am dead, as I have been honoured alive.

Ver. 6. *Ariſe, O* LORD, *in thine Anger, lift up thy ſelf becauſe of the Rage of mine Enemies: and awake for me to the Judgment* that *thou haſt commanded.*] But if I be innocent in this Matter, (as thou, LORD, knoweſt I am) then I beſeech thee to ſhew thy Diſpleaſure at this unjuſt Proceeding. Let my Enemies know that thou art the ſovereign LORD of all, by ſuppreſſing them now that they rage thus furiouſly. Thou haſt appointed Judges upon Earth to diſtribute Juſtice, and relieve the Oppreſſed; but haſt reſerved the ſupreme Judgment to thy Self, even over them as well as others: And therefore I beſeech thee to take Cognizance of my Cauſe, and iſſue out thy Orders ſpeedily for my Deliverance from this Perſecution.

Ver. 7. *So ſhall the Congregation of the People compaſs thee about: For their Sakes therefore return thou on high.*] Which will draw all the People to make their Reſort to thee, and wait upon thee, till thou doſt them Juſtice. For that Reaſon aſcend thy Judgment-ſeat again, and, as thou haſt done formerly, vindicate me from theſe Calumnies, and aſſert my Innocence.

Ver. 8. *The* LORD *ſhall judge the People: Judge me, O* LORD, *according to my Righteouſneſs, and according to mine Integrity* that is *in me.*] The Sovereign of the World will not fail to diſpenſe equal Juſtice unto all, according to their Works. Of which I beſeech thee, O LORD, to give an Example in me, who deſire no greater Favour than to be diſpoſed of according to my Innocence in this Matter. Thou haſt deſigned indeed a Kingdom for me: But let me loſe it, if ever I entertain a diſloyal Thought againſt him who now enjoys it.

Ver. 9. *Oh let the Wickedneſs of the Wicked come to an End, but eſtabliſh the Juſt: For the righteous* GOD *trieth the Hearts and Reins.*] I leave it to thee to perform thy own Purpoſes; who haſt long born with the Wicked in their unjuſt Proceedings, but wilt at laſt put a Stop to them, and ſettle the Righteous, whom they injuriouſly perſecute from Place to Place, in a peaceable Poſſeſſion of what thou haſt promiſed. For thou, LORD, diſcerneſt the moſt ſecret Thoughts and Deſires of them both; and as thou canſt not be deceived with ſpecious Shows, ſo thou wilt not be corrupted, either by Fear or Favour, to pronounce an unrighteous Sentence.

Ver. 10. *My Defence is of* GOD, *which ſaveth the Upright in Heart.*] That is my Comfort, none but GOD, the Judge of all, can either abſolve or condemn me; and he knows ſo well the Sincerity of my Heart, that I aſſure my ſelf from him of Protection and Deliverance.

Ver. 11. GOD *judgeth the Righteous, and* GOD *is angry* with the Wicked *every Day.*] For he is ſo juſt a Judge, that he will defend the Cauſe of the Righteous, and never be perſwaded to take Part with the Wicked; with whom he is highly diſpleaſed all the Time that he forbears to ſtrike him, and cut him off in his evil Courſes.

Ver. 12. *If he turn not, he will whet his Sword: He hath bent his Bow, and made it ready.*] And if he will not repent, as he is invited by that Forbearance, he ſhall be puniſhed at laſt with ſo much the greater Severity; becauſe he would take no warning, but went on confidently, notwithſtanding the Vengeance he was told was preparing for him.

Ver. 13. *He hath alſo prepared for him the Inſtruments of Death: He ordaineth his Arrows againſt the Perſecutors.*] Vengeance, which will certainly come, tho' it ſtay long, and not fail to do Execution: For it is decreed in Heaven, (if they do not repent) and will pierce through the very Heart of *Saul*, and all the reſt of my fierce and outragious Perſecutors.

Ver. 14. *Behold, he travelleth with Iniquity, and hath conceived Miſchief, and brought forth Falſehood.*] See here the Folly of this Calumniator; who wickedly plots my Ruin, and hath formed moſt miſchievous Deſigns againſt my Life; which ſhall all miſcarry, and deceive his Expectation.

Ver. 15. *He made a Pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the Ditch* which *he made.*] And he ſhall not eſcape ſo neither; for beſide the Shame of not being able to compaſs his Deſign, he ſhall ſuffer that himſelf which he laboured to do to me. Juſt as you ſee ſometimes a Man fall into the Pit which was digged with his own Hands; ſo ſhall he fall upon the Sword which himſelf hath drawn, 1 *Sam.* XXXI. 4.

Ver. 16. *His Miſchief ſhall return upon his own Head, and his violent dealing ſhall come down upon his own Pate.*] The Miſchief which with ſo much Pains he contrived againſt me, ſhall be retorted upon that Head which projected it: All his Violence and cruel Perſecutions, wherewith he thought to oppreſs me, ſhall fall down (like a Stone thrown into the Air) upon himſelf, and cruſh him to Pieces.

Ver. 17. *I will praiſe the* LORD *according to his Righteouſneſs: And will ſing Praiſe to the Name of the* LORD *moſt High.*] Which ſhall afford Matter of perpetual Praiſe to me; who will moſt thankfully acknowledge not only the Power, but the juſt Judgment of GOD, and his Faithfulneſs to his Word. With the greateſt Delight and Joy ſhall my Songs celebrate the glorious Majeſty of the LORD, which far ſurmounts our higheſt Thoughts and Thankſgivings.

PSALM VIII.

To the chief Musician upon *Gittith*. A Psalm of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

The Targum *takes the Word* Gittith *to denote that this Psalm was to be sung to a Harp which* David *brought with him from* Gath. *Others think it to be only a Note in Musick; or to have Relation to the Time of Vintage. But* Theodoret *looking upon it (as indeed it seems to be)* ψαλμὸς ἐπινικιος, *a Psalm of Triumph to* God, *the Author of some great Victory he had gotten, I take it to have been composed by* David, *and delivered to the Master of the Musick in the Tabernacle after he had overthrown that haughty insolent Giant,* Goliah *of* Gath. *Which is very agreeable to the Matter of the Psalm, and a lively Emblem of* Christ's *Conquest over our great Enemy the Devil.*

Ver. 1. O Lord *our* Lord, *how excellent is thy Name in all the Earth! who hast set thy Glory above the Heavens.*] O Lord, the Sovereign of the World, who art graciously pleased to own us in a peculiar Manner to be thy Subjects, who can behold the Wonders of thy Works, and the Wisdom of thy Providence, and not be astonished at the incomparable Greatness and Splendour of thy Majesty? which all the Earth proclaims with the highest Praises; but cannot be contained within the spacious Bounds of the Heavens, whose glorious Brightness it far surpasses.

Ver. 2. *Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings hast thou ordained Strength, because of thine Enemies, that thou mightest still the Enemy and the Avenger.*] What an amazing Wonder is it, that thou shouldest enable the weakest of Men, to do the greatest and most Praise-worthy Things? and particularly hast now assisted me (who in Comparison of *Goliah* am but an Infant) with Power and Strength to subdue that mighty Giant? It is enough to confound all the Enemies, and to stop the Mouths of the most pernicious Opposers of thee, and of thy People: As the far more to be celebrated Works of the *Messiah* and his Disciples, when they shall but speak the Word, shall confound even the Devil himself, that great Enemy of thine, and Tormentor of Mankind.

Ver. 3. *When I consider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained;*] Who are extremely stupid, if they do not most thankfully acknowledge thy singular Love to them. For when I seriously look up to thy celestial Habitation, and consider the Vastness of that admirable Structure, and behold also those Lights which thou hast placed there in beautiful Order.

Ver. 4. *What is Man, that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man, thou visitest him?*] I know not what to say, but am perfectly astonished to think, that thou, whose Greatness I see so visibly in the Heavens, shouldest condescend so far, as to shew such Grace and Favour as thou dost to this wretched Creature Man: Particularly to me, who am the meanest of my Brethren. Lord, what am I, that thou shouldest work such Salvation by my Hands? Nay, what is the greatest Prince in the World, that thou shouldest thus honour him? Bu that thou shouldest advance our mortal Nature so highly, in *that* Son of Man, the Lord Christ, whom the World will villifie and despise, exceeds all Wonder, and ought to be the Matter of our perpetual Admiration.

Ver. 5. *For thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crowned him with Glory and Honour.*] Thou hast raised Man to such a Dignity, and honoured him so highly, (particularly me, whom thou hast used as thy Minister to punish that insulting Giant, who defied thy Armies, 1 *Sam.* XVII,) that he is not much inferiour to the celestial Hosts: As shall be more clearly seen in thy Son Christ, whom thou hast determined to advance far above the highest Angels in Heaven; after he hath for a short Space been much beneath them, by submitting himself to a poor Condition in our Flesh, that he might lay down his Life for Man. (*Heb.* XI. 6, 7, &c.)

Ver. 6. *Thou madest him to have Dominion over the Works of thy Hands; thou hast put all* Things *under his Feet.*] Whose Glory is great, even in the Dominion thou hast given him over all thy Creatures in this lower World: (though this be nothing comparable to the Exaltation of the great Son of Man; under whose Feet thou hast put in Subjection all Creatures whatsoever, even those in the highest Heavens:) There is nothing here but he hath a Power over it, and finds Means to make it subject to his Pleasure.

Ver. 7. *All Sheep and Oxen, yea, and the Beasts of the Field:*] Not only the Beasts that are tame, such as Sheep and Oxen, but those that are wild, even Tygers, Bears, and Lions.

Ver. 8. *The Fowl of the Air, and the Fishes of the Sea,* and whatsoever *passeth through the Paths of the Seas.*] Yea, and the Fowls of the Air cannot fly so high, but he hath Ways to reach them: Nor can the Fishes in Lakes, or Rivers, or those in the deepest Ocean, exempt themselves from his Dominion.

Ver. 9. O Lord *our* Lord, *how excellent is thy Name in all the Earth?*] All which moves me again to cry out and to conclude as I began, in the highest Admiration of thy most powerful Wisdom and Goodness, saying, O mighty Lord, our most gracious Governour, who can comprehend the excellent Greatness of thy Majesty? O how transcendent is thy Loving-kindness, in all thou hast done, and wilt do for Man? How loudly ought the whole World to sound forth thy Praise?

PSALM IX.

To the chief Musician upon *Muth-labben*. A Psalm of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm which David *composed and delivered to the Master of Musick in the Tabernacle, when he*

he was in some great Distress: (v. 13.) wherein he commemorates God's *former Deliverance of him; both when he killed* Goliah, *and got frequent Victories afterward over the* Philistines, *and other Enemies of* Israel, *v.* 11, 15.

I mention Goliah, *because, among the various Opinions about* Muth-labben, *I find none so probable as theirs, who think it hath some relation to him: to whom there are three Ways of applying those* Hebrew *Words. All of them by* Almuth, *understand to be meant* upon the Death. *And then* Labben, *some think, signifies* the Son, *that is, a Great Man, as I have expounded in my Preface to this Work. Others render it* the White; *that is, an Illustrious, Noble Person, or one famous in Arms, as* Goliah *was. Others render it* intermediate: *which agrees also to that Champion, who came out and stood* between *the two Armies, and defied* Israel, 1 Sam. *XVII. v.* 4, &c. *Thus the* Chaldee *Paraphrase here interprets. But that this Psalm was not made just after* David's *Victory over him, with respect merely to his Death, is apparent from the mention of* Sion, *v.* 11, 14. *which was not then in the Hands of* Israel. *And therefore he only calls to mind (as I said in the Beginning) this Deliverance, upon some fresh Occasion he had to implore the mighty Assistance of the Divine Power, which then first began to appear to him.*

Ver. 1. I *Will praise thee,* O LORD, *with my whole Heart. I will shew forth all thy marvellous Works.*] I will acknowledge, O LORD of Heaven and Earth, thy Omnipotent Goodness, with the heartiest Devotion and intire Affection to thee. Nor will I content my self to praise thee for this last Victory alone, but on this Occasion commemorate all the Wonders thou hast formerly done for me.

Ver. 2. *I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing Praise to thy Name, O thou most High.*] The Thoughts of which are so pleasing and delightful to me, that I cannot but be exceeding glad and leap for Joy, while I celebrate with my Songs thy Supreme Majesty; whose Power infinitely excels the united Force of all Creatures upon Earth.

Ver. 3. *When mine Enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy Presence.*] It was thou who madest my Enemies turn their Backs, and seek for Safety in Flight: (1 *Sam.* XVII. 51.) and the dread of thee so pursued them, that they stumbled and fell down wounded, (*v.* 52.) and were destroyed, because they saw thee appear against them.

Ver. 4. *For thou hast maintained my Right, and my Cause, thou satest in the Throne judging Right.*] For in that great Controversy between us and the *Philistines*, (1 *Sam.* XVII. 9.) wherein I stood up against *Goliah*, Thou didst take my Part, (as thou hast done since in many other Battels,) asserting the Cause which I defended, and openly giving Judgment on my Side.

Ver. 5. *Thou hast rebuked the Heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their Name for ever and ever.*] Thou hast given a terrible Rebuke to the audacious Insolence of those Nations; thou hast cut off their daring Champion, who so impiously defied thy Armies, and cursed me by his Gods: Thou hast put them to Shame, and made their Names infamous to all Generations.

Ver. 6. *O thou Enemy, Destructions are come to a perpetual End: and thou hast destroyed Cities, their Memorial is perished with them.*] O thou insulting Enemy, who in thy own Thoughts hadst compleatly devoured us, where are the utter Desolations thou threatnedst to our Country? and the Cities which thou intendest to lay even with the Ground? How vain were thy Hopes of leaving no Remembrance of them but in their Ruins?

Ver. 7. *But the* LORD *shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his Throne for Judgment.*] Such shall be the End of all the rest of my Enemies, who can never prevail against the LORD. For, though Earthly Thrones may tumble down, he and his Throne cannot possibly be disturbed, but remain fixed for ever; and his Justice is as immutable, which he will equally dispense to all.

Ver. 8. *And he shall judge the World in Righteousness, he shall minister Judgment to the People in Uprightness.*] For his Jurisdiction is not limited, nor can his Justice be corrupted: But the whole World is under his Government, and no wicked Man is so powerful, that he should be able to escape his Vengeance, which shall pursue every one of them, and render to them exactly according as they deserve.

Ver. 9. *The* LORD *also will be a Refuge for the oppressed, a Refuge in Times of Trouble.*] And as he will punish the Wicked, be their Authority never so great; so he will preserve the Righteous, be they never so helpless. They may safely fly unto him for Sanctuary against the unjust Persecutions of their mighty Oppressors, and he will give them seasonable Relief in all their Distresses.

Ver. 10. *And they that know thy Name will put their Trust in thee: for thou,* LORD, *hast not forsaken them that seek thee.*] All they that are acquainted with thee, and with the merciful and just Methods of thy Providence, will consent to this; and, abhorring all undue Ways of saving themselves in troublesome Times, will heartily confide in thee: For it was never known, that thou, LORD, hast left any Man destitute of thy Help, who hath piously made his constant Addresses to thee.

Ver. 11. *Sing Praises to the* LORD, *which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the People his Doings.*] Let them join therefore their Songs with mine, and praise the LORD, who dwells among us by his special Presence in the Sanctuary. Let us make all the World know what wonderful Things he hath done for us, that they may also learn to trust in him.

Ver. 12. *When he maketh Inquisition for Blood, he remembreth them: he forgetteth not the Cry of the humble.*] Who, tho' he may seem to wink for a Time at the Cruelty of violent Men, yet will call them at last to a strict Account for all the innocent Blood they have shed, and for their unjust and unmerciful Usage of meek and humble Persons; whose Cry he never forgets, (though he doth not presently answer it) but takes a fit time to be avenged of their Oppressors.

Ver.

Ver. 13. *Have Mercy upon me, O* LORD, *conſider my Trouble*, which I ſuffer *of them that hate me, thou that liſteſt me up from the Gates of Death.*] In Confidence of this, I cry unto thee now, O LORD, for my ſeaſonable Relief, in this neceſſitous Condition to which my Enemies have reduced me. O merciful GOD, who haſt delivered me from the greateſt Dangers, from the Lion and the Bear, from *Goliah*, who thought to give my Fleſh to the Birds and the Beaſts, (1 *Sam.* XVII. 44.) from *Saul*, and all others who were ready to ſwallow me up; caſt a gracious Eye upon my preſent Diſtreſs, and bring me out of it.

Ver. 14. *That I may ſhew forth all thy Praiſe in the Gates of the Daughter of Zion, I will rejoice in thy Salvation.*] That I may go into thy Sanctuary (which now thou haſt placed in *Sion*) and there, in the moſt frequent Aſſemblies of thy People, add this to all the reſt of thy Praiſes, that thou haſt heard my Cry. O how joyful ſhall I be! how ſhall I triumph, when I magnify thy Power in my Deliverance!

Ver. 15. *The Heathen are ſunk down in the Pit* that *they made: in the Net which they hid, is their own Foot taken.*] Which the Experience I have had of thy Goodneſs makes me comfortably expect: For I have often ſeen all the Deſigns and Contrivances of the *Philiſtines* and other Nations againſt thy People, to conclude in nothing but their own utter Ruin; their Engines recoil upon themſelves, as *Goliah* was ſlain by his own Sword.

Ver. 16. *The* LORD *is known by the Judgment which he executeth: the wicked is ſnared in the Work of his own Hands. Higgain. Selah.*] This is a Thing notorious to all, and for which thou art renowned: By this thou convinceſt the Minds of thoſe that deny thy Providence. Nor is there any thing more admirable, and worthy of our Meditation, than this thy righteous Judgment upon the Ungodly; when they are entangled in their own Devices, and, contrary to all Expectation, bring upon themſelves that Deſtruction which they had prepared for others.

Ver. 17. *The wicked ſhall be turned into Hell*, and *all the Nations that forget* GOD.] This makes me confident that I am not deceived, when I look to ſee theſe wicked Men, who now ſeek my Ruin, precipitate themſelves into the Pit of Deſtruction. Nay, ſo ſhall all thoſe People periſh (though never ſo numerous) who, forgetting what GOD hath done to others, proceed on in the ſame impious Deſigns againſt the Innocent.

Ver. 18. *For the needy ſhall not alway be forgotten: the Expectation of the Poor ſhall not periſh for ever.*] For the LORD, in due Time, will ſhew that he doth not neglect them when they are poor and helpleſs, though for the preſent he defer to relieve them. Let them patiently wait upon him under their Affliction, and he will not fail their Expectation.

Ver. 19. *Ariſe, O* LORD, *let not Man prevail: let the Heathen be judged in thy Sight.*] And may I deſire thee, O LORD, to delay no longer. O ſuffer not weak and wretched Man to domineer on this Faſhion, nay, boaſt of his Victories; but call all thoſe Nations that oppoſe thee to an Account, and condemn them to that Puniſhment which they deſerve.

Ver. 20. *Put them in fear, O* LORD, that *the Nations may know themſelves to be but Men.*] Strike a Terror into them, O LORD, by ſome ſharp Vengeance inflicted on them. Shake out of their Mind the vain Opinion they have of themſelves and of their Power; and make the Nations ſenſible, they are but frail and miſerable Men.

PSALM X.

ARGUMENT.

It is not known by whom, or on what Occaſion this Pſalm was compoſed: But it is a moſt lively Deſcription of the Inſolency of wicked Atheiſtical Men, when they have Power, and are in Authority; which they abuſe to the Oppreſſion of the meaner or weaker Sort, and make no Conſcience by what Arts they bring their Deſigns about. Againſt whom the Pſalmiſt humbly beſeeches the Divine Vengeance, and reſts confident they ſhall be ſuppreſſed.

Ver. 1. WHY *ſtandeſt thou afar off, O* LORD? why *hideſt thou* thy ſelf *in times of Trouble?*] It is ſtrange, O LORD, to ſee thee, who haſt done us the peculiar Honour to ſay we have thee nigh unto us on all Occaſions, (*Deut.* IV. 7.) now withdraw thy ſelf to ſuch a Diſtance from us, that there is no Sign of thy Coming to our Relief. It perplexes our Thoughts, and we cannot find the Reaſon of it, that now in theſe grievous Streights, which ſeem to us the fitteſt Opportunity, thou doſt not appear for our Deliverance.

Ver. 2. *The wicked in* his *Pride doth perſecute the Poor: let them be taken in the Devices that they have imagined.*] If our great Affliction do not move thy Pity towards us, yet the intolerable Pride, and inſolent Rage of the Wicked, we are prone to expect, ſhould meet with a Rebuke from thy juſt Indignation. Eſpecially ſince he oppreſſes the Poor, who have no Friend but thee alone; whoſe Glory alſo it is to humble arrogant Men, by making thoſe very Devices caſt them down, whereby they thought to ruin others, and exalt themſelves. O that we might ſee them fall in this remarkable Manner!

Ver. 3. *For the wicked boaſteth of his Heart's Deſire, and bleſſeth the covetous*, whom *the* LORD *abhorreth.*] For whilſt the wicked proſpers thus in all his Deſigns, he is not only encouraged in thoſe evil Courſes, but glories in them, and brags that he can do what he liſts. Nay, it doth not ſuffice him to do Evil himſelf, but he commends and praiſes the unjuſt Extortions and Rapines of other violent Men; whom he accounts happy, though the LORD abhors them.

Ver. 4. *The wicked through the Pride of his Countenance will not ſeek* after GOD: GOD *is not in all his Thoughts.*] But it is to no Purpoſe to tell him how the LORD abhors them; for ſcornfully rejecting all ſuch good Admonitions, he will not ſo much as enquire and conſider whether there be a GOD or no: but rather boldly concludes there is no GOD, or if there be, that he cares not what we do.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *His Ways are always grievous; thy Judgments are far above out of his Sight:* as for *all his Enemies, he puffeth at them.*] And therefore, though all his Buſineſs be to moleſt and torment his Neighbours, and he is always bringing forth ſome Miſchief or other, yet that thou wilt judge him for it, is the fartheſt Thing from his Thoughts. And as for thoſe Men that are his Adverſaries, he contemns them all, and values them not a ſtraw.

Ver. 6. *He hath ſaid in his Heart, I ſhall not be moved, for I ſhall never be in Adverſity.*] He confidently promiſes himſelf that none ſhall be able to diſturb him; and reſts ſecure he ſhall always be thus proſperous, which makes him reſolve he will never alter his wicked Courſe of Life, let GOD or Man do what they can againſt him.

Ver. 7. *His Mouth is full of Curſing and Deceit, and Fraud: under his Tongue* is *Miſchief and Vanity.*] Nor ſtick at any Thing that may ſerve his Ends: for he makes no Conſcience to call for one Curſe after another upon himſelf, to confirm thoſe Oaths or Promiſes which he never intends to keep; but by this impious Means to deceive and cheat thoſe that rely upon his Word. He ſpeaks very fair, but it is only to hide the miſchievous Wickedneſs which lurks in his Heart.

Ver. 8. *He ſitteth in the lurking Places of the Villages: in the ſecret Places doth he murther the innocent: his Eyes are privily ſet againſt the Poor.*] And if he cannot this Way compaſs all his Deſigns, he makes no Scruple to rob and kill upon the High-way: near unto which he lurks, and in covert Places, where no Body ſees him, ſhoots at the innocent Traveller; eſpecially when he ſees he is defenceleſs, and hath none to help him.

Ver. 9. *He lieth in wait ſecretly as a Lion in his Den: he lieth in wait to catch the Poor: he doth catch the Poor when he draweth them into his Net.*] He lies as cloſe as a Lion in his Den; and is as cruel when he hath caught his Prey. A Fowler is not more cunning to draw the Birds to his Net, than he to get poor helpleſs Men into his Power, that he may devour them.

Ver. 10. *He croucheth,* and *humbleth himſelf, that the Poor may fall by his ſtrong ones.*] For he can counterfeit himſelf (if Occaſion ſerve) to be a harmleſs Traveller; and look ſo humbly and innocently, that the poor Man, on whom he intends to ſeize, ſuſpecting no Danger, will lie the more open to his ſudden and violent Aſſault.

Ver. 11. *He hath ſaid in his Heart,* GOD *hath forgotten, he hideth his Face, he will never ſee* it.] From which GOD himſelf, he thinks, will not protect him. They call him (ſaith he within his Heart) the Omnipotent, and the Poor commit themſelves unto him: But what cares he for them? He regards them not, and will never call me to any Account for what I have done againſt them.

Ver. 12. *Ariſe, O* LORD, *O* GOD, *lift up thine Hand: forget not the humble.*] Confute theſe Blaſphemies, O LORD, and delay no longer, O thou Omnipotent Judge of the World, to appear in juſt Diſpleaſure againſt them. Stretch forth thy Hand to confound theſe violent Oppreſſours, and to relieve all thy afflicted Servants.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore doth the Wicked contemn* GOD, *he hath ſaid in his Heart, thou wilt not require* it.] What is it, but thy Long-ſuffering, and bearing ſo much with them, that makes the Wicked thus inſolently deſpiſe thee: He concludes, thou wilt never puniſh him, becauſe thou art ſo patient with him.

Ver. 14. *Thou haſt ſeen* it, *for thou beholdeſt Miſchief and Spite to require* it *with thy Hand: the Poor committeth himſelf unto thee, thou art the Helper of the fatherleſs.*] I doubt not, indeed, that thou takeſt notice of their Villany, and that thou wilt requite them in their Kind, for all the Miſchief and Vexation of which they have been the Authors. The Poor have Reaſon to commend their Cauſe to thee; and to expect that thou wilt do them Right, who art the Protector of the weak and the friendleſs, who have nothing to rely upon but thy Goodneſs.

Ver. 15. *Break thou the Arm of the wicked, and the evil* Man: *ſeek out his Wickedneſs* till *thou find none.*] But the Wicked will never believe this, as long as they are able to do Miſchief; and therefore I beſeech thee to deſpoil them of all their Power to hurt and oppreſs thy People. Be avenged on them for their Wickedneſs, after which they fanſie thou wilt not enquire; and let there be no Footſteps of it remaining.

Ver. 16. *The* LORD *is King for ever and ever: the Heathen are periſhed out of his Land.*] Thou canſt eaſily do it, being the ſame everlaſting King, by whoſe Authority and Power, the ſeven impious Nations were expelled out of this Land.

Ver. 17. LORD, *Thou haſt heard the Deſire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their Heart, thou wilt cauſe thine Ear to hear:*] And I believe thou wilt do it, O LORD, who haſt ſo often ſince granted the Deſire of the afflicted. Thou wilt diſpoſe their Heart humbly to wait upon thee, and then vouchſafe them a favourable Audience.

Ver. 18. *To judge the fatherleſs and the oppreſſed, that the Man of the Earth may no more oppreſs.*] When they pray thee to aſſert the Right of the fatherleſs, and other poor helpleſs People, and to puniſh their inſolent Oppreſſours: that thoſe Tyrants, ſprung out of the Earth, and who deſerve to be tumbled down thither again, may be no longer terrible to them.

PSALM XI.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, the Title tells us, was compoſed by David: *And very likely (as* Theodoret *and others conjecture) when* Saul *perſecuted him; and ſome adviſed him to ſeek his Safety in Flight. Or rather, when* Saul *began to have evil Deſigns againſt him, and he was invited by ſome, who pretended Friendſhip to him, to a Place of Safety in the mountainous Country of* Judæa. *When he came to the Crown, he delivered it to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle, to be ſung there in Remembrance of what then paſſed between his Friends,*

him, and God *Almighty, in whom he placed his Hope.*

Ver. 1. *IN the* Lord *put I my Truſt: how ſay ye to my Soul, Flee as a Bird to your Mountain?*] It is not in Fortreſſes or Friends that I place my Confidence, and hope for Safety, but only in the Lord, who hath anointed me his King. On him I rely; and therefore do not put me in Fear, and bid me fly away thus ſpeedily, like a timorous Bird before the Fowler, to your Place of Security.

Ver. 2. *For lo, the wicked bend* their *Bow, they make ready their Arrow upon the String; that they may privily ſhoot at the upright in Heart.*] Behold, ſay you, the Danger wherein thou art is no leſs imminent, than when a Fowler hath bent his Bow, and fitted his Arrow upon the String, and, lying cloſe, hath the Bird in his Eye, whom he means to ſhoot: For juſt ſo have *Saul* and his wicked Counſellours laid their Plot on a ſudden to deſtroy thee.

Ver. 3. *If the Foundations be deſtroyed, what can the righteous do?*] And if Men have no Regard to Laws and publick Decrees, which are the Foundation of humane Society, but will boldly violate all known and ſtanding Rules of Juſtice and Truth; what Security can an honeſt Man have? or what ſhould he do, but make Haſte away from this Court, where they act ſo arbitrarily, and are ſo perfidious?

Ver. 4. *The* Lord *is in his holy Temple, the* Lord's *Throne is in Heaven: his Eyes behold, his Eye-lids try the Children of Men.*] My Anſwer is, that the World is not governed by Chance, nor can Men carry Things juſt as they pleaſe: But the Lord, into whoſe holy Palace no unjuſt Counſels can poſſibly enter, and whoſe Throne is infinitely above that of the higheſt King on Earth: He, I ſay, is the ſupreme and moſt righteous Ruler of all Affairs; and no Miſchief can be ſo ſecretly contrived, no wicked Deſign ſo artificially diſſembled, but it lies open before his Eyes, and he ſees thorough it: nor need he take any Pains to diſcover it; for at the firſt Glance, as we ſpeak, he perfectly diſcerns how all Men are inclined, and looks to the very Bottom of their Hearts.

Ver. 5. *The* Lord *trieth the righteous, but the wicked, and him that loveth Violence, his Soul hateth.*] And he may think fit to try the Fidelity of him whom he knows to be upright, by many Adverſities; that he may afterward give him the more illuſtrious Teſtimonies of his Approbation and Love. But whatſoever Succeſs the Wicked, and he that delights in doing Miſchief, may have for the preſent, he is moſt hateful to God; and he will, without fail, ſeverely puniſh him, for abuſing his Power to Oppreſſion and violent Dealing.

Ver. 6. *Upon the wicked he ſhall rain Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt:* this ſhall be *the Portion of their Cup.*] The Wicked may think themſelves very ſecure, becauſe they are ſo cunning and ſo ſtrong; but how can they defend themſelves againſt the Lord, who hath innumerable Ways to inſnare them when they leaſt think of it; and can as unexpectedly overthrow all their Forces, as, when the Heavens are moſt ſerene, a ſudden Storm of Thunder and Lightning, and tempeſtuous Blaſts ariſes, and tears up the Trees by the Roots? Thus the *Sodomites*, thus the *Egyptians* periſhed; and ſuch Meaſure will the wiſe Diſpenſer of all Puniſhments mete to theſe violent Oppreſſours.

Ver. 7. *For the righteous* Lord *loveth Righteouſneſs, his Countenance doth behold the upright.*] For the Lord, who is juſt in his own Nature, and in all his Ways, loves none but thoſe who are like himſelf: and therefore he will plague all injurious Perſons, but with ſpecial Favour defend and reward all upright Men, who ſtedfaſtly keep (notwithſtanding all the Injuries they receive) in the Paths of Righteouſneſs.

PSALM XII.

To the Chief Muſician upon *Sheminith*. A Pſalm of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm was compoſed by David, *and delivered to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle, to be ſung as the VI. Pſalm, upon the Harp with eight Strings. The Occaſion of it is not expreſſed; but it is a ſad Complaint of the corrupt Manners of that Age; (eſpecially of the Court of* Saul, *v.* 3.) *in which it was hard to find an honeſt plain dealing Man, in whom one might confide. Some think it aims partly at* Doeg, *and ſuch like Courtiers; partly at the* Ziphites, *and ſuch perfidious People in the Countrey, who promiſing him their Friendſhip, (as* Theodoret *underſtands it,) would have moſt baſely betrayed him unto* Saul, *his declared Enemy.*

Ver. 1. *HElp,* Lord, *for the godly Man ceaſeth; for the faithful fail from among the Children of Men.*] Lord, be thou my Safeguard, for there is no ſuch thing as Kindneſs and Friendſhip to be found among Men: I dare truſt my ſelf with none of them; for there is not ſo much as any Truth and Honeſty left in the World.

Ver. 2. *They ſpeak Vanity every one with his Neighbour:* with *flattering Lips,* and *with a double Heart do they ſpeak.*] One Neighbour cannot with Safety believe another: they are all Liars and Diſſemblers, pretending fair in Words, but meaning quite otherways.

Ver. 3. *The* Lord *ſhall cut off all flattering Lips,* and *the Tongue that ſpeaketh proud Things.*] This Vice hath ſpread it ſelf ſo univerſally among us, that it cannot be rooted up, but only by the Hand of Heaven: which will deſtroy theſe peſtilent Deceivers; who ſpeak alſo big and blaſphemous Words, whereby they daunt thoſe that are below them.

Ver. 4. *Who have ſaid, With our Tongue will we prevail, our Lips* are *our own: who* is *Lord over us?*] We will have the better, ſay they, of all thoſe that oppoſe us; and our Tongues are the Weapons whereby we will get the Victory. They are our own; who ſhall hinder us from imploying them to ſupplant whom we pleaſe? Whether it be true or falſe which we ſay, what is that to any Body? or who ſhall call us to an Account for it?

Ver.

Ver. 5. *For the Oppreſſion of the Poor, for the Sighing of the Needy, now will I ariſe, (ſaith the* LORD) *I will ſet* him *in Safety* from him that *puffeth at him.*] That will the LORD; whom the Sighs, and Tears, and miſerable Groans of thoſe poor Wretches, who are oppreſſed by your Calumnies, have moved to reſolve to take a ſpeedy Vengeance on you. He hath abſolutely determined to reſcue and deliver them from your Snares and fraudulent Practices: You may puff and ſtorm as much as you pleaſe, but ſhall not be able to hinder it.

Ver. 6. *The Words of the* LORD are *pure Words*; as *Silver tried in a Furnace of Earth, purified ſeven Times.*] For the Promiſes of GOD are not deceitful like yours, but ſincere, and void of all Guile: The pureſt Silver, refined to the greateſt Perfection, is not more free from Droſs, than they are from all Mixture of Falſhood.

Ver. 7. *Thou ſhalt keep them,* O LORD, *thou ſhalt preſerve them from this Generation for ever.*] I am confident, O LORD, thou wilt perform them, and not ſuffer thy Words to fail. Thou wilt ever preſerve him that confides in thee, from this perverſe Generation, how oft ſoever they renew their Attempts againſt him.

Ver. 8. *The Wicked walk on every Side, when the vileſt Men are exalted.*] Which will make the Wicked not know which Way to turn themſelves; but be ready to burſt with Anger and Vexation, when they ſee thoſe poor Men, whom they contemned and villified, not only preſerved, but exalted by thy Favour to Dignity and Honour.

PSALM XIII.

To the chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm was compoſed by David, *and delivered to the Maſter of the Muſick in the Tabernacle. It is not known to what Time it relates, but by the Matter of it we underſtand he was in ſome great Diſtreſs when he indited it, either by the Perſecution of* Saul, *or of* Abſalom. Theodoret *thinks the latter, and gives this Reaſon for it: That the Trouble which* Saul *gave him was before his great Sin, and ſo he was full of Confidence; but that of* Abſalom *was after it, which made him cry out in this doleful Manner.*

Ver. 1. HOW *long wilt thou forget me,* O LORD, *for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy Face from me?*] What a ſad Condition is this, O LORD, into which I am faln, and in which thou ſeemeſt to neglect me? I have waited a long Time for ſome Glimpſe of thy Favour; but can ſee no Sign of Deliverance, nor tell how long thou intendeſt to delay it.

Ver. 2. *How long ſhall I take Counſel in my Soul,* having *Sorrow in my Heart daily? How long ſhall mine Enemy be exalted over me?*] O how afflictive is it, that there is no End of my anxious Thoughts! but I am always caſting in my Mind, with a heavy Heart, where I ſhall ſhift for my Life, and can think my ſelf in no Place ſecure. The Power of my Enemy is very great, and threatens, like a Tempeſt hanging over my Head, every Moment to fall upon me. O when ſhall I ſee it diſperſed!

Ver. 3. *Conſider, and hear me,* O LORD *my* GOD: *Lighten mine Eyes, leſt I ſleep* the Sleep *of Death.*] Thus I ſigh perpetually to thee, O LORD, the omnipotent Ruler and juſt Judge of the World; beſeeching thee to commiſerate my Affliction, and, as thou haſt done often, to anſwer my Prayer. Thou ſeeſt with what Dangers I am encompaſſed, and how forlorn and diſmal my Condition is: Endue me with Wiſdom and Circumſpection, that I may eſcape theſe Dangers; and revive and chear me under theſe ſad Afflictions, leſt my Spirit ſink within me, or the Enemy deſtroy me.

Ver. 4. *Leſt mine Enemy ſay, I have prevailed againſt him*: And *thoſe that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.*] Let not him that perſecutes me, boaſt of his Succeſs, as he certainly will, unleſs thou affordeſt me thy Conduct and Comfort; which I humbly again implore, that they who join with him may not have the Pleaſure to ſee me fall, and inſult over my Miſery.

Ver. 5. *But I have truſted in thy Mercy, my Heart ſhall rejoice in thy Salvation.*] I am unworthy indeed of thy Favour, but hope thou wilt magnify thine own Mercy, in which I have placed ſuch an entire Confidence, that I perſwade my ſelf, I ſhall have the Joy to ſee thee deliver me out of all theſe Diſtreſſes.

Ver. 6. *I will ſing unto the* LORD, *becauſe he hath dealt bountifully with me.*] Which ſhall be acknowledged with the moſt chearful Hymns of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to the LORD, who hath dealt ſo well with me, as to render to me, not according to my Merits, but according to my Hope and Truſt in his inconceivable Mercy.

PSALM XIV.

To the chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm (which was compoſed, as the foregoing, by David, *and delivered by him to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle) may probably refer, though it be not in the Title expreſſed, to the univerſal Apoſtacy of the People, in the Rebellion of* Abſalom, *from the Allegiance they owed to him, and from the Duty they owed to* GOD.

Ver. 1. THE *Fool hath ſaid in his Heart,* There is *no* GOD: *They are corrupt, they have done abominable Works,* there *is none that doth Good.*] Though the Wicked are not yet ſo impudent, as openly to deny GOD with their Mouths, yet ſuch is their abominable Filthineſs, ſo ſhameleſs are they in their Wickedneſs, ſo univerſally depraved, that their ſecret Thoughts ſure are, GOD takes no Notice what they do, or that he will not judge them for it.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD *looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to ſee if there were any*

that

that did underſtand and *ſeek* God.] But let them know, that he exactly obſerves them; and that all the Ways of the Sons of Men are naked and bare before his Eyes: Though, alas! there is nothing now to be ſeen, but Ignorance and Contempt of his Majeſty.

Ver. 3. *They are all gone aſide, they are* all *together become filthy:* There is *none that doth Good, no not one.*] The whole Nation hath loſt all Senſe of their Duty; and, like a Body without a Spirit, is ſo rotten and putrified, that it is hard to find ſo much as one that hath any Senſe of Goodneſs in him.

Ver. 4. *Have all the Workers of Iniquity no Knowledge? Who eat up my People* as *they eat Bread, and call not upon the* Lord.] Strange! that they ſhould all be thus ſenſeleſs, as not only to injure and oppreſs my poor innocent People, but to be cruel and void of all Pity toward them, and to throw off likewiſe all Religion!

Ver. 5. *There were they in great Fear: For* God *is in the Generation of the Righteous.*] What a Terror will it be to them, to ſee the Divine Vengeance ſeize on them, when they think themſelves moſt ſecure? For he, who is the righteous Judge, will not deſert thoſe who are faithful to him, but graciouſly deliver them.

Ver. 6. *You have ſhamed the Counſel of the Poor: becauſe the* Lord *is his Refuge.*] Your Confuſion, O ye atheiſtical Fools, will be the greater, becauſe you mock'd and jeer'd at that poor deſpicable Party of Men, who reſolved to adhere to Piety and vertuous Loyalty, and to wait patiently upon God, and truſt in him alone for Safety.

Ver. 7. *O that the Salvation of Iſrael* were come *out of Zion! when the* Lord *bringeth back the Captivity of his People, Jacob ſhall rejoice,* and *Iſrael ſhall be glad.*] Who is mighty to ſave, whatſoever you think, and reſides by a ſpecial Token of his Preſence in Mount *Sion.* O that it might pleaſe him to ſend us Deliverance from thence, and to reſtore us again to the happy Enjoyment of that Place, from whence we are baniſhed! it would turn our ſad Lamentations into the moſt chearful Thankſgivings; and fill not only *Judah,* but all the Tribes of *Iſrael,* with Joy and Gladneſs. 2 *Sam.* XIX. 9, &c.

PSALM XV.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, in which he excites the People to the Study of ſolid Vertue, was compoſed by David, *either when he brought the Ark to Mount* Sion, (2 Sam. *VI.*) *or when he was reſtored thither again, (as he deſired in the Concluſion of the foregoing Pſalm) after the Rebellion of* Abſalom, 2 Sam. *XIX. Then it was very ſeaſonable to admoniſh them to live better, as became thoſe who were under the Government of* God, (*as* Theodoret *excellently ſpeaks*) *and had received ſuch a great Deliverance from him.*

Ver. 1. Lord, *who ſhall abide in thy Tabernacle? who ſhall dwell in thy holy Hill?*] Lord, what an Happineſs is it, that thou wilt be pleaſed to dwell among us in this Mountain, wherein thou haſt pitch'd thy Tabernacle! but who ſhall have the Honour to be admitted into thy Society, and enjoy all the Privilege, of a true Worſhipper of thee?

Ver. 2. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh Righteouſneſs, and ſpeaketh the Truth in his Heart.*] I hear thee anſwer, (methinks) as if a Voice came from thy holy Oracle, ſaying, not all that are deſcended of *Abraham,* nor every one that offers me Sacrifices, and obſerves my appointed Rites; but he who completely endeavours to pleaſe me in all the Parts of a holy Life, exerciſing Juſtice and Mercy to his Neighbour, as well as Piety to me; and taking Care he wrong not his Neighbour in Words, no more than in Deeds.

Ver. 3. He that *backbiteth not with his Tongue, nor doth Evil to his Neighbour, nor taketh up a Reproach againſt his Neighbour.*] He that doth not abuſe his Tongue to Calumny and Detraction, nor is any other Way injurious to his Neighbour; who neither reproaches his Neighbour himſelf, nor lightly believes, encreaſes, or ſpreads the Reproaches which are begun by others.

Ver. 4. *In whoſe Eyes a vile Perſon is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the* Lord: he that *ſweareth to* his own *Hurt, and changeth not.*] Who never courts Men for their Riches and Power, if their Wickedneſs makes them deſpicable; but honours thoſe who are truly pious, though never ſo poor: And who hath ſuch a Reſpect to Religion, that whatſoever he promiſes by Oath he will perform, though he loſes never ſo much by keeping his Faith.

Ver. 5. He that *putteth not out his Money to Uſury, nor taketh Reward againſt the Innocent. He that doth theſe* Things *ſhall never be moved.*] He who orders his private Affairs ſo exactly, that he makes no Gain of the Money he lends to his poor Brethren, (*Exod.* XXII. 25. *Deut.* XXIII. 19, 20.) and behaves himſelf ſo well, when he is in publick Office, that no Gift can corrupt him to condemn the Innocent, or abſolve the Guilty. He that lives after this Manner, need never fear to fall from my Favour.

PSALM XVI.

Michtam of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A moſt excellent Pſalm of David, *more precious than any Jewel, and worthy to be inſcribed on a Marble Pillar, to endure to all Poſterity. For beſide admirable Expreſſions of his Faith and Confidence in* God, (*though he was moſt violently perſecuted by* Saul, *and forced to fly into foreign Countries*) *it contains a Prophecy of the Reſurrection of our* Lord Christ *from the Dead.*

Ver. 1. *Preſerve me,* O God: *For in thee do I put my Truſt.*] Thou ſeeſt, O moſt mighty God, with what Dangers I am encompaſſed: Defend and protect me, I beſeech thee,

thee, for I depend upon thee alone for Safety.

Ver. 2. O my Soul, *thou hast said unto the* LORD, *Thou* art *my* LORD: *My Goodness* extendeth *not to thee*;] I ever did so, as my Conscience testifies; and therefore I hope thou wilt still continue my gracious GOD. Not that I can merit any Favour of thee, or, by any Good that I can do, requite thy Kindness to me:

Ver. 3. But *to the Saints that* are *in the Earth, and* to *the Excellent in whom* is *all my Delight.*] But if thou wilt be pleased to protect me, I will imploy all my Power (when I come to the Throne) to protect the Pious in the Land: worthy Men, who excel in Vertue, shall be preferred and honoured; for they are the Persons who are most dear to me, and in whose Company alone I delight.

Ver. 4. *Their Sorrows shall be multiplied* that *hasten* after *another* God: *Their Drink-offerings of Blood will I not offer, nor take up their Names into my Lips.*] They multiply Idols, (here in this Place whither I am driven, 1 *Sam.* XXVI. 19.) and are zealous in the Service of another GOD: But I will never forsake thee, by partaking with them in their abominable Sacrifices, (in which the Blood of Men is offered,) not by swearing by the Name of any of their false Gods.

Ver. 5. *The* LORD is *the Portion of mine Inheritance, and of my Cup: thou maintainest my Lot.*] The LORD of Heaven and Earth is the GOD whom I serve: He, who is the supreme Dispenser of all Things, hath given me a Kingdom for my Portion, where he himself is worshipped; and he will defend and maintain my Title to it, while I adhere to him.

Ver. 6. *The Lines are fallen unto me in pleasant* Places; *yea, I have a goodly Heritage.*] As I am resolved to do: For there is no Place so pleasant as that where he is worshipped; no Country comparable to that (for all Manner of good Things) which he hath settled upon me, though I am not yet possessed of it.

Ver. 7. *I will bless the* LORD, *who hath given me Counsel: My Reins also instruct me in the Night-seasons.*] I will therefore praise the LORD, and acknowledge his Love; who hath hitherto guided me to behave my self so prudently, that my Enemies have not been able to surprize me. In the darkest Night of Affliction, when I could not see my Way, he hath secretly inspired my Mind with wise Thoughts, and admonished me what Course to take for my Preservation.

Ver. 8. *I have set the* LORD *always before me: Because* he is *at my right Hand, I shall not be moved.*] This hath ever been my Practice, to conceive GOD always present to me: And since he is still nigh to support and defend me, the fiercest Assaults of my Enemies shall never be able to deject me from that Dignity which he hath designed for me.

Ver. 9. *Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth: My Flesh also shall rest in Hope.*] In Confidence of which, I feel not only a perfect Satisfaction, but Joy and Triumph of Heart. My Tongue cannot but boast of it; and be my Condition never so weak and low, I shall rest in Hope to be raised up again.

Ver. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption.*] For thou wilt not suffer me to remain always in this forlorn Condition, nor let him, whom thou hast anointed to be thy King, be destroyed by *Saul: Much less let that great King perish,* (*whom thou hast promised of my Seed*;) *but though they kill him, and lay him in his Grave, thou wilt take him from thence, and raise him from the Dead, before his Body be in the least corrupted.*

Ver. 11. *Thou wilt shew me the Path of Life: In thy Presence* is *Fulness of Joy, at thy right Hand* there are *Pleasures for evermore.*] Thou wilt shew me the Way to escape out of all these Dangers, (*and do much more for the* Messiah, *who, being raised from the Dead, shall live eternally*;) and not only preserve my Life, but satiate me with Joy, when thy Favour hath settled me on the Throne, by that Almighty Power which is able to dispense everlasting Happiness; *and will certainly exalt the* Messiah *to reign at thy right Hand in endless Joy and Pleasure, after all his grievous Sufferings.*

PSALM XVII.

ARGUMENT.

A Prayer of *David; wherein he humbly represents to* GOD *his Innocence, in those Things whereof he was accused,* (*of affecting the Kingdom, I suppose, and seeking the Life of* Saul, 1 Sam. *XXIV. 9.*) *And therefore beseeches him to grant him Deliverance from his Persecutors and Calumniators,* (Saul *it is most likely, and those that set him on:*) *See* Theodoret.

Ver. 1. HEar *the Right,* O LORD, *attend unto my Cry, give Ear unto my Prayer,* that goeth *not out of feigned Lips.*] I am oppressed, O LORD, with such false Accusations, that I have no Way but to appeal to thee, who art the righteous Judge of the World; beseeching thee to deal with me according to the Justice of my Cause. It is my most earnest Request to thee; and I desire no Favour of thee, if these Lips have spoken any deceitful Words against *Saul*, or do now dissemble with thy Majesty.

Ver. 2. *Let my Sentence come forth from thy Presence: Let thine Eyes behold the Things that are equal.*] Who hast long suspended thy Sentence, and let my Enemies pursue me, as if I was guilty: But I humbly intreat thee at last openly to acquit me; and to shew that thou regardest the Greatness of no Man's Person, but only his Uprightness and Integrity.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast proved mine Heart, thou hast visited* me *in the Night, thou hast tried me,* and *shalt find nothing: I am purposed* that *my Mouth shall not transgress.*] Thou art privy to the inmost Thoughts of my Heart; in the greatest Retirements thou seest what I design; and hast tried me also (as Gold in the Fire) by many Afflictions, which thou didst never find to make me think of any unlawful Courses for my Preservation: But still I have been what I pretended, and my Words and secret Thoughts have always agreed together.

Ver. 4. *Concerning the Works of Men, by the Word of thy Lips I have kept* me from *the Paths*

of the Destroyer.] I know what Men are apt to do in such Circumstances; but the Respect I bear to thy Commandments hath preserved me from those murtherous Practices, which the violent Man would have boldly attempted. (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Hold up my Goings in thy Paths, that my Footsteps slip not.*] And I beseech thee still confirm me in this Resolution; that no Temptation may make me forsake that Tract of Vertue in which I have hitherto persisted;

Ver. 6. *I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O* God: *incline thine Ear unto me, and hear my Speech.*] And in which I doubt not to be safe: For I have never yet cried unto thee, but thou hast granted my Request, and wilt not now, I hope, refuse to condescend unto it; but admit of this Appeal which I make to thee, and do me Right.

Ver. 7. *Shew thy marvellous Loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right Hand them which put their Trust* in thee, *from those that rise up* against them.] Thy Mercy will appear most wonderful in my Preservation from this imminent Danger wherein I am. Magnifie it therefore, O thou whose Property it is to interpose thy mighty Power, for the Deliverance of such as confide in nothing but thy Omnipotent Goodness, from those who rise up against them to destroy them.

Ver. 8. *Keep me as the Apple of the Eye: hide me under the Shadow of thy Wings,*] I commend my self to thy watchful Providence; beseeching thee to defend me with the same Care, that we do that tender Part in the midst of our Eye. As a Hen covers her Chickens under her Wings, from the ravenous Bird that hovers over them to devour them:

Ver. 9. *From the wicked that oppress me,* from *my deadly Enemies,* who *compass me about.*] So do thou, O Lord, protect me (who fly unto thee for Safety) from the Wicked that are about to seize on me and spoil me; from those deadly Enemies, which have beset me round, with eager Desires and Hopes to destroy me.

Ver. 10. *They are inclosed in their own Fat: with their Mouth they speak proudly.*] Who are so stuft with worldly Goods, and have thriven so long in their ungodly Courses, that they are grown extream Proud of their Power: and not only haughtily threaten my Destruction, but presumptuously brag as if they had already accomplished their Desire.

Ver. 11. *They have now compassed us in our Steps: they have set their Eyes bowing down to the Earth;*] And indeed they have now gotten me and my Followers into a very great Strait: (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26.) and which Way soever we turn our selves, we are in Danger to fall into the Hands of those who have stedfastly resolved our utter Ruin.

Ver. 12. *Like as a Lion* that *is greedy of his Prey, and as it were a young Lion lurking in secret Places.*] No Lion can be more desirous to tear a Lamb in Pieces, than *Saul* is to make a Prey of me. Like a young Lion in his Den, he watches when an Opportunity will offer it self that he may fall upon me, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 7, 8. XXIV. 2, *&c.*)

Ver. 13. *Arise, O* Lord, *disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my Soul from the Wicked,* which is *thy Sword;*] Delay no longer, therefore, O Lord, but speedily appear to defeat him. Throw him down to the Ground, when he thinks to fall upon me: and though thou hast suffered the Wicked to wound me sorely, yet let him not kill me, who depended upon thy Power, which is able to deliver me.

Ver. 14. *From Men* which are *thy Hand, O* Lord, *from Men of the World,* which have *their Portion in* this *Life, and whose Belly thou fillest with thy hid* Treasure: *they are full of Children, and leave the rest of their* Substance *to their Babes.*] He hath many, I know, that join with him to destroy me; but they are only mortal Men, O Lord, who can do nothing but what thou permittest them, for my Correction: worldly Men, who look no further than this present Life; and desire no other Satisfaction, but to be very rich, to have a numerous Posterity, and to leave them great Estates, when they can enjoy them no longer.

Ver. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy Likeness.*] Which Prosperity I do in no wise envy them, but think my self happy that I can approach into thy Presence, and with a good Conscience wait for thy Favour: nothing doubting, but when thou shalt shew thy self in thy Majesty and Power, it will be abundantly to my Satisfaction.

PSALM XVIII.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of *David,* the Servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the Words of this Song, in the Day that the Lord delivered him from the Hand of all his Enemies, and from the Hand of *Saul:* and he said,

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, *(whom the* Lord *chose to serve him in governing the Children of* Israel,) *and delivered by him to the Master of the Musick in the Tabernacle, for a perpetual Commemoration of* God's *gracious Care over him, and Preservation of him, through the whole Course of the long Persecution and Opposition he met withal, before he could get the Kingdom. For which singular Providence, he still gave particular Thanks to* God *after every Deliverance or Victory which he vouchsafed him: but at last (so great was his Piety) he made one general Acknowledgment of* God's *Goodness to him, when he was peaceably settled upon his Throne, in delivering him from the* Philistines, *the* Syrians, *and other Nations, who rose up against him: (and that in a miraculous Manner, as he describes it, v. 13, 14, &c. where* Theodoret *observes, that in his Time* God *scattered the Enemies of* Christians *by the like dreadful Tempests:) but especially from* Saul, *who (as he was the first, so) was the most violent, implacable, and dangerous of all his Enemies.*

The

The Senſe of the Pſalm is This.

Ver. 1. *I will love thee, O* LORD *my Strength.*] I love thee, O LORD, to whom I owe my Safety and Preferment, with the moſt paſſionate and ardent Affection: and I will never ceaſe to love thee thus, as long as ever I live.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD *is my Rock, and my Fortreſs, and my Deliverer; my* GOD, *my Strength in whom I truſt, my Buckler, and the Horn of my Salvation, and my high Tower.*] For it was not the Caves and Lurking-Places, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 1, 5. XXIII. 23.) nor the Fortreſſes and ſtrong Holds, (XXIII. 14, 19, 29.) the Rocks and impregnable Forts, (XXIV. 2.) the high Mountains and ſteep Hills to which I fled, (XXVI. 1.) that preſerved me from my Enemies; but the LORD Almighty, whom I made my Refuge, and whom I acknowledge for my Deliverer: To his gracious Providence, and powerful Protection, I aſcribe my Safety, (and will never confide in any other Security) he defended me in the moſt dangerous Aſſaults of my Enemies; he repelled all their Forces, and placed me out of the Reach of their Violence.

Ver. 3. *I will call upon the* LORD, *who is worthy to be praiſed: ſo ſhall I be ſaved from my Enemies.*] Praiſed therefore be the LORD, unto whom I humbly commended my ſelf by Prayer (as I mean to do always) in my Diſtreſſes, and he delivered me from all my Enemies.

Ver. 4. *The Sorrows of Death compaſſed me, and the Floods of ungodly Men made me afraid.*] When there appeared no Way for my Eſcape, but they thought they had me as ſure as a Bird taken in a Net; when whole Troops of ungodly Men came pouring in upon me as a Torrent that threatned to ſweep me quite away;

Ver. 5. *The Sorrows of Hell compaſſed me about; the Snares of Death prevented me.*] When I had no more Power to help my ſelf, than a dead Man bound Hand and Foot in his Grave; (ſo ſuddenly was I entangled in their deadly Snares, 1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26.)

Ver. 6. *In my Diſtreſs I called upon the* LORD, *and cried unto my* GOD: *he heard my Voice out of his Temple, and my Cry came before him, even into his Ears.*] This was my Belief in ſuch grievous Straits: I made my uſual Addreſſes to the LORD, and with great Earneſtneſs ſupplicated my moſt merciful GOD, who had ſo often delivered me: And, though he be ſo infinitely above us in his heavenly Palace, he did not deſpiſe my Petition, but it was admitted into his Preſence, and found a gracious Audience.

Ver. 7. *Then the Earth ſhook and trembled; the Foundations alſo of the Hills moved, and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth.*] For he inſtantly appeared in a ſenſible Manner to confound my Enemies; who ſaw his wrathful Diſpleaſure in the dreadful Tempeſt which fell upon them, and made the very Earth tremble under them.

Ver. 8. *There went up a Smoak out of his Noſtrils, and Fire out of his Mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it.*] There was nothing to be ſeen but ſtirring Smoak and devouring Fire; which at his Command ſhot out burning Coals among them.

Ver. 9. *He bowed the Heavens alſo, and came down: and Darkneſs was under his Feet.*] His glorious Majeſty alſo viſibly ſhewed it ſelf, bowing the Heavens, (the Place of its Reſidence) and coming down in a thick Cloud, which was ſpread as a Carpet under it.

Ver. 10. *And he rode upon a Cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the Wings of the Wind.*] Some of the principal Angels were its Chariot, wherein it rode very ſwiftly; and a rapid Wind was the Token of their Preſence, (2 *Sam.* V. 24.)

Ver. 11. *He made Darkneſs his ſecret Place: his Pavilion round about him* were *dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Skies.*] A great Darkneſs obſcured it; for round about it were the reſt of the heavenly Miniſters, diſpoſed to attend upon it in watry Vapours, and thick Clouds of the Sky.

Ver. 12. *At the Brightneſs* that was *before him his thick Clouds paſſed, Hail-ſtones and Coals of Fire.*] Who, going forth from his glorious Preſence, ſent Hailſtones and Coals of Fire (as in the Days of *Joſhua*, X. 11.) in the Face of my Enemies.

Ver. 13. *The* LORD *alſo thundred in the Heavens, and the Higheſt gave his Voice; Hail-ſtones and Coals of Fire.*] Which were followed with ſuch terrible Thunder (like that in the Days of *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* VII. 10.) mixed with more Hailſtones and fiery Exhalations, as declared the Greatneſs of his Majeſty, and the Mightineſs of his Power.

Ver. 14. *Yea, he ſent out his Arrows, and ſcattered them; and he ſhot out Lightnings, and diſcomfited them.*] Theſe were the Arrows wherewith he ſcattered them: There needed no other Darts to diſcomfit them.

Ver. 15. *Then the Channels of Waters were ſeen, and the Foundations of the World were diſcovered, at thy Rebuke, O* LORD, *at the Bleſt of the Breath of thy Noſtrils.*] For even the Earth it ſelf was rent and torn by them; they cleft it aſunder, and penetrated ſo deep, that the ſecret Abyſſes of it were diſcovered through the Breaches that were made; when thou, O LORD, in great Indignation didſt rebuke my Enemies.

Ver. 16. *He ſent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many Waters.*] Nothing but ſuch a Power from above could have preſerved me, which the LORD was pleaſed graciouſly to extend to me: He laid hold on me, and kept me from ſinking; he ſnatched me out of many and great Dangers, which, like a Deluge, were ready to overwhelm me.

Ver. 17. *He delivered me from my ſtrong Enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too ſtrong for me.*] He delivered me firſt from that mighty Giant *Goliah*, and then from *Saul*, whoſe Power I was not able to withſtand; and afterwards from the *Philiſtines* and *Syrians*, and many other Nations, whoſe Forces were far ſuperiour unto mine, and whoſe Hatred inſtigated them to do all they could to deſtroy me.

Ver. 18. *They prevented me in the Day of my Calamity: but the* LORD *was my Stay.*] When I was weak, and unable to reſiſt, they ſuddenly invaded me; but the LORD would not ſuffer them to overthrow me! (1 *Sam.* XVIII, XXIV, &c.)

Ver. 19. *He brought me forth alſo into a large Place: he delivered me, becauſe he delighted in me.*] But brought me out of thoſe Straits,

into

into a State of perfect Liberty. He delivered me, (when they thought they had pent me up ſo cloſe that I could not eſcape them) becauſe he had a Kindneſs for me.

Ver. 20. *The* LORD *rewarded me according to my Righteouſneſs, according to the Cleanneſs of my Hands hath he recompenſed me.*] He knew alſo that I was unjuſtly perſecuted; and therefore rewarded me according to the Integrity of my Heart, and the Purity of my Actions; which were never guilty of that whereof they accuſed me.

Ver. 21. *For I have kept the Ways of the* LORD, *and have not wickedly departed from my* GOD.] For I never took any unlawful Courſes for my Deliverance; but when *Saul* fell into my Hands, I would not kill him, becauſe he was the LORD's Anointed, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 10.)

Ver. 22. *For all his Judgments* were *before me, and I did not put away his Statutes from me.*] For I laid his Precepts before me, as the Rule of my Actions; and did not bid them ſtand aſide, when it ſeemed to be my Intereſt not to obſerve them.

Ver. 23. *I was alſo upright before him: And I kept my ſelf from mine Iniquity.*] But choſe rather to ſuffer any Thing than loſe my Integrity: And how unjuſtly ſoever my Enemies dealt with me, I would not imitate them; but, though I could not hinder *theirs*, kept my ſelf from *mine* Iniquity.

Ver. 24. *Therefore hath the* LORD *recompenſed me according to my Righteouſneſs, according to the Cleanneſs of my Hands in his Eye-ſight.*] And therefore hath the LORD, who adminiſters all Things with the exacteſt Juſtice, and the greateſt Goodneſs, heard my Prayer; (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 23.) and dealt with me according to my innocent Intentions, which would not let me defile my Hands with the Blood of *Saul*, when it was in my Power to be revenged of him.

Ver. 25. *With the Merciful thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf merciful, with an upright Man thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf upright.*] Such is the gracious Method of thy Providence, O LORD, who wilt do Good to thoſe who do Good to others, and do them Juſtice alſo (againſt their Oppreſſors and Calumniators) who preſerve their Integrity.

Ver. 26. *With the Pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure, and with the Froward thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward.*] And keep thy Promiſes faithfully with thoſe whoſe Piety is unfeigned, and who immoveably keep their Fidelity to thee. But if any will take crooked Ways to obtain their Ends, thou wilt enſnare them in their own Devices; and by ſuch Means, as they leaſt think of, lead them to Deſtruction.

Ver. 27. *For thou wilt ſave the afflicted People: But wilt bring down high Looks.*] For thou art wont to deliver thoſe who are Poor and Miſerable, when they humbly wait on thee; and to lay thoſe low, who (proud of their Power) inſolently oppreſs them.

Ver. 28. *For thou wilt light my Candle: The* LORD *my* GOD *will enlighten my Darkneſs.*] I my ſelf am an Inſtance of it, who owe all my Proſperity and Joy to thee; by whom (when my Hopes were ready to expire, 1 *Sam.* XXVII. 1.) I was brought out of a calamitous Eſtate into this Splendor and royal Greatneſs which now I enjoy.

Ver. 29. *For by thee I have run through a Troop: And by my* GOD *have I leaped over a Wall.*] For the ſtrongeſt and moſt numerous Enemies were not able to ſtand before me: I eaſily ſcaled the higheſt Walls, wherein they thought themſelves moſt ſecurely defended againſt me, 2 *Sam.* V. 7, &c.

Ver. 30. As for GOD, *his Way is perfect: The Word of the* LORD *is tried: He is a Buckler to all thoſe that truſt in him.*] GOD is not like to Men, for he never deſerts his Servants (as Men are wont to do thoſe that depend upon them) in difficult and dangerous Affairs: His Promiſes are freer from Deceit, than the moſt refined Gold from Droſs; and none ſhall be able to hurt thoſe that rely upon them.

Ver. 31. *For who is* GOD *ſave the* LORD? *Or who is a Rock ſave our* GOD?] For who is there that can fruſtrate his Intentions, or reſiſt his Will? What Power is there above or equal to his whom we worſhip, that can injure thoſe whom he will protect, or defend thoſe whom he will deſtroy?

Ver. 32. It is GOD *that girdeth me with Strength, and maketh my Way perfect.*] It was this mighty LORD, that inſpired me with Courage, and removed all Obſtacles out of my Way, to the compleating my Conqueſts, (2 *Sam.* V. 10.)

Ver. 33. *He maketh my Feet like Hinds* Feet, *and ſetteth me upon my high Places.*] If Swiftneſs was neceſſary, he made me as nimble as an Hind, to purſue my Enemies even into thoſe Places, which for their Height and Craggineſs, were thought inacceſſible.

Ver. 34. *He teacheth my Hands to war, ſo that a Bow of Steel is broken by mine Arms.*] If there was need of Dexterity or Strength, he beſtowed it on me to ſuch a Degree, that I was able to wreſt the ſtrongeſt Bow out of my Enemy's Hand, and break it in Pieces.

Ver. 35. *Thou haſt given me the Shield of thy Salvation: And thy right Hand hath holden me up, and thy Gentleneſs hath made me Great.*] If at any Time I fell into the thickeſt Troups of them, I was ſafely protected by thee, and delivered. Thy mighty Power upheld me from being oppreſſed by their Numbers; and by thy Goodneſs, with a Handful of Men, I got great Victories.

Ver. 36. *Thou haſt enlarged my Steps under me, that my Feet did not ſlip.*] Thou didſt open a wide Paſſage to me in my greateſt Straits; and in the moſt uneven and difficult Ways I never ſtumbled:

Ver. 37. *I have purſued mine Enemies, and overtaken them: Neither did I turn again till they were conſumed.*] But having routed my Enemies, I purſued them ſo cloſely, that I overtook them in their Flight; and did not return to my Camp till I have deſtroyed them.

Ver. 38. *I have wounded them, that they were not able to riſe: They are fallen under my Feet.*] I gave them ſuch a Blow, that they were not able to renew the Fight; but were ſo perfectly ſubdued, that they lay at my Feet.

Ver. 39. *For thou haſt girded me with Strength unto Battel: Thou haſt ſubdued under me thoſe that roſe up againſt me.*] Which is all to be aſcribed to thy mighty Power, O GOD; who gaveſt me both

both the Courage to fight, and Succeſs in the Encounter with ſuch numerous Enemies, as hoped to deſtroy me.

Ver. 40. *Thou haſt alſo given me the Necks of mine Enemies; that I might deſtroy them that hate me.*] To thy Praiſe I again mention it, (not to magnify my own Proweſs) that they who hated me, ſubmitted their very Necks to me, that I might kill them, or impoſe what Yoke I pleaſed on them.

Ver. 41. *They cried, but* there was *none to ſave* them: even *unto the* LORD, *but he anſwered them not.*] They ſought for Help of their Allies and Confederates; but it was beyond their Power to deliver them; for they were deſerted by the LORD, who regarded not their Cries unto him;

Ver. 42. *Then did I beat them ſmall as the Duſt before the Wind: I did caſt them out as the Dirt in the Streets.*] But left them to be beaten and diſperſed by me, till they were as weak as the ſmall Duſt, which is toſſed up and down with every Wind; and as contemptible as the Dirt in the Street, which every Body tramples under Foot.

Ver. 43. *Thou haſt delivered me from the Strivings of the People*; and *thou haſt made me the Head of the Heathen: a People* whom *I have not known ſhall ſerve me.*] Thus haſt thou continued thy Kindneſs to me, till thou ſeatedſt me on the Throne, both of *Iſrael* and *Judah*; whoſe Contentions are ceaſed, and both united in me. (2 *Sam.* V. 1.) And ſince that Time thou haſt not only delivered me from thoſe dangerous Rebellions, (2 *Sam.* XVIII.) and ſeditious Motions, (2 *Sam.* XX.) which have been raiſed among my own People to dethrone me: but made foreign Nations ſubject to me; and People whom I had no Knowledge of, to become my Tributaries.

Ver. 44. *As ſoon as they hear of me, they ſhall obey me: the Strangers ſhall ſubmit themſelves unto me.*] The very Report of me and of my Victories, made ſome of them heartily ſubmit themſelves to me; and others diſſemble their Hoſtility, and offer me their Service.

Ver. 45. *The Strangers ſhall fade away, and be afraid out of their cloſe Places.*] They trembled and fell, like withered Leaves, at the Sound of my Name; and, diſtruſting their ſtrong Holds, came creeping out with Fear, to ſurrender them into my Hands.

Ver. 46. *The* LORD *liveth, and bleſſed* be *my Rock: and let the* GOD *of my Salvation be exalted.*] Bleſſed be the LORD, (to whoſe eternal Glory and Honour I ſpeak all this:) Let him be everlaſtingly praiſed, who hath preſerved me in ſo many Dangers: Let him who not only preſerved, but exalted me, be magnified and exalted with the higheſt Praiſes.

Ver. 47. It is GOD *that avengeth me, and ſubdueth the People under me.*] For he is that mighty GOD (I can never ſay it often enough) who hath many and many a Time executed Vengeance for me on thoſe who were injurious to me; and hath brought many Nations under my Empire.

Ver. 48. *He delivereth me from mine Enemies: yea, thou liſteſt me up above thoſe that riſe up againſt me: thou haſt delivered me from the violent Man.*] It is he to whom I owe my Life, (which my Enemies, if he had not reſcued me, would have taken from me:) and, which is more, thou haſt made me ſuperiour to them all, and ſet me on a Throne, in Spite of the fierce and violent Perſecution of *Saul*, from which thou didſt mercifully deliver me.

Ver. 49. *Therefore will I give Thanks unto thee, O* LORD, *among the Heathen: and ſing Praiſes unto thy Name.*] And therefore I will every where make my thankful Acknowledgments unto thee, O LORD: Thoſe ſtrange Nations ſhall know that I aſcribe my Victories unto thee; in Honour of whoſe great Name I will ſing this perpetual Song.

Ver. 50. *Great Deliverance giveth he to his King; and ſheweth Mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his Seed for evermore.*] The LORD hath granted wonderful and manifold Deliverances to me; who reign not by Uſurpation, but by his ſpecial Appointment: And the ſame Mercy, by which alone I was advanced to this Dignity, ſhall be continued to me, and to my Poſterity, till the coming of that great King, whoſe Kingdom ſhall have no End.

PSALM XIX.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by David, *(and delivered by him to the Maſter of the Muſick in the Tabernacle,) declaring that no Man could be ignorant of* GOD, *who would conſider his admirable Works; much leſs could the* Jews, *whom he had inſtructed by his Law; and therefore juſtly expected their greater Care not wilfully to offend him.*

Ver. 1. THE *Heavens declare the Glory of* GOD: *and the Firmament ſheweth his Handy-work.*] There is no Part of this great Fabrick of the World, which doth not direct us to a moſt mighty Being, by whom it was made: but above all the reſt, the Heavens, which are ſo vaſtly extended, and wherein we ſee ſo many glorious Bodies, proclaim aloud to all Mankind, the immenſe Greatneſs, and Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of GOD; which ſhine moſt brightly there.

Ver. 2. *Day unto Day uttereth Speech, and Night unto Night ſheweth Knowledge.*] By their ſettled and orderly Revolution the Day and the Night are made; from whoſe conſtant Succeſſion, and commodious Variations, there iſſues forth (as Water from a Fountain) perpetual Inſtruction, and Matter of Praiſe and Thanks to his moſt wiſe Goodneſs.

Ver. 3. There is *no Speech nor Language* where *their Voice is not heard.*] They cannot ſpeak indeed, as we can do; nor do we hear any Words they utter: and yet, without theſe, they are underſtood by all Nations; even by the moſt barbarous, who underſtand not a Word of any other Language.

Ver. 4. *Their Line is gone out through all the*

Earth, and their Words to the End of the World: in them hath he set a Tabernacle for the Sun;] They all read here, as in a Book, the wonderful Art and Skill of that Almighty Being, who framed this regular Structure; though they be never so remote, they hear them preach (as the Apostles hereafter shall preach more fully) how great and how good he is: especially if they hearken to that universal Minister of his, the Sun, which hath its Habitation fixed for it here;

Ver. 5. *Which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a strong Man to run a Race.*] And comes forth every Morning deckt with such radiant Light, that no Bridegroom looks so chearfully, or is so adorned on his Marriage-Day. Its Swiftness also is as admirable as its Beauty, for the mightiest Champion can but weakly imitate it, in the Speediness, Evenness, and Unweariedness of its Course.

Ver. 6. *His going forth is from the End of the Heaven, and his Circuit unto the Ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the Heat thereof.*] It runs from the East to the West every Day; and, in its yearly Revolution, visits the Southern and Northern Parts: so that all the Earth feels the Benefit of its quickning Heat.

Ver. 7. *The Law of the* LORD *is perfect, converting the Soul: the Testimonies of the* LORD *is sure, making wise the simple.*] Thus is GOD visible to all the World in the Face of the Heavens: but to us he is conspicuous in a more excellent Manner, by the Revelation he hath made of himself in the Law of *Moses*: which is a more perfect Light to guide us, than the Sun it self; restoring and comforting the most drooping Souls, more than the Sun chears our bodily Spirits. For it is a sure Testimony of GOD's Will and of his Love, and preserves ignorant Souls from being seduced to worship the Sun as a God: for it makes them, at the first Word, so wise, as to understand that *the* LORD *created the Heavens, as well as the Earth*;

Ver. 8. *The Statutes of the* LORD *are right, rejoycing the Heart: the Commandment of the* LORD *is pure, enlightning the Eyes.*] And from thence delivered to us a compleat Rule of Life for all Sorts of Men among us: who see with great Joy all Officers and Rulers, both Sacred and Civil, directed how to manage all for the publick Good; and every private Man taught to keep himself pure from all manner of Wickedness: it being as clear as the Sun, what he ought to do, and what to avoid.

Ver. 9. *The Fear of the* LORD *is clean, enduring for ever: the Judgments of the* LORD *are true, and righteous altogether.*] The true Worship of GOD is here unalterably settled, (*Deut.* XII. v. 32.) free from all profane Mixtures of Superstition: and all our Transactions with Men are prescribed to be in perfect Truth and Righteousness.

Ver. 10. *More to be desired are they than Gold, yea, than much fine Gold: sweeter also than Honey, and the Honey-Comb.*] We are happier in this, than in all the Gold and precious Treasures which are brought from other Countries; or in the most delicious Pleasures which he hath provided for us in our own.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, by them is thy Servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great Reward.*] I say nothing but what I have tried: For by following the Admonitions of thy holy Laws, both in my private and my publick Capacity, thy Servant is become thus illustrious: and in their Observance there is not only much Satisfaction at present, but a far greater Reward in the Conclusion.

Ver. 12. *Who can understand his Errours? cleanse thou me from secret Faults.*] All our Unhappiness is, that we do not observe them so strictly as we ought. They are a perfect Rule; but our Obedience, alas! is so exceedingly imperfect, that we cannot so much as number our Wandrings from it: Many of which we never observed; and therefore are so far from meriting any Reward for Obedience, that I must humbly beg thy Pardon for the Demerits of my Negligence.

Ver. 13. *Keep back thy Servant also from presumptuous Sins, let them not have Dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great Transgression.*] And the Assistance of thy Grace likewise (without which I shall still farther swerve from thy Law) to preserve me from all wilful Sins against thee. I am devoted to thy Service, O LORD; therefore I beseech thee so to strengthen my Will to please thee, that no Temptation may prevail with me to consent deliberately to offend thee. Then shall I (notwithstanding my Infirmities and Ignorances) be accounted upright before thee; and be free from a great deal of Guilt, which otherways, by manifold Transgressions, I shall draw upon me.

Ver. 14. *Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditation of my Heart be acceptable in thy Sight, O* LORD, *my Strength, and my Redeemer.*] And I shall have the Confidence also then to address my self unto thee, both openly, and in Secret, with Hopes that all my Sacrifices (offered from an Heart that sincerely studies to be obedient to thee) shall be acceptable in thy Sight, O LORD; to whom I fly for Safety and Deliverance, in all the Assaults which the Enemies either of my Body or my Soul make upon me.

PSALM XX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, *(and by him delivered to the Master of the Musick in the Tabernacle) wherein the People are taught to pray for his good Success in some great Expedition: it is probable (from v. 7.) against the* Ammonites *and* Syrians, *who came with great Numbers of Horsemen and Chariots to fight with him,* 2 Sam. X. 6, 8. 1 Chron. XIX. 7.

Ver. 1. THE LORD *hear thee in the Day of Trouble, the Name of the* GOD *of Jacob defend thee.*] The LORD, who never fails those that seek him, hear thy Prayer, when the Enemy distresseth thee in the Day of Battel: (2 *Sam.* X. 9, &c.) The mighty GOD, who hath made

made a gracious Covenant with *Jacob* and his Posterity, protect thee, and make thee victorious.

Ver. 2. *Send thee Help from the Sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.*] O GOD, who hast pitcht thy Tabernacle among us, and dwellest in Mount *Sion* by a visible Token of thy Presence, succour our Sovereign in the Time of Need; and support him in all Assaults of such numerous Enemies as are combined against him.

Ver. 3. *Remember all thy Offerings, and accept thy burnt Sacrifice. Selah.*] Shew, by some signal Token from Heaven, that thou art pleased with all his Oblations and burnt Sacrifices, whereby he made his Supplication to thee, for thy Blessing on him in this Undertaking.

Ver. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own Heart, and fulfil all thy Counsel.*] Make him as prosperous as he himself wishes; and enable him to accomplish whatsoever he designs.

Ver. 5. *We will rejoice in thy Salvation, and in the Name of our* GOD *we will set up our Banners: The* LORD *fulfil all thy Petitions.*] In Confidence of thy Help, we will shout when we set upon our Enemies; in thy Power and Might, we will advance courageously against them: For the LORD will not fail to grant the Petitions of our Sovereign; whose Cause is so just, and who hath been so insolently treated by them. (2 *Sam.* X. 3, 4.)

Ver. 6. *Now know I that the* LORD *saveth his Anointed: He will hear him from his holy Heaven, with the saving Strength of his Right-hand.*] This is the assured Hope of every Soul of us; we are as certain as if he had already obtained it, that the LORD will make him Victorious: For he reigns by his special Appointment: Who, as he infinitely excels in Strength, and commands all the Hosts of Heaven; so will declare the exceeding Greatness of his Power, in giving him an illustrious Deliverance.

Ver. 7. *Some trust in Chariots, and some in Horses: But we will remember the Name of the* LORD *our* GOD.] We are not daunted at the vast Numbers of our confederate Enemies; some of which boast of their Chariots, others of their Horses: But to all these we oppose the mighty Power of the LORD, who hath heretofore done such great Things for us.

Ver. 8. *They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen and stand upright.*] And we triumph before hand, saying, they are thrown down from their Chariots, and fain from their Horses, wherein they trusted: But we, whom they despised, are erect and stand unmoveable, merely by our Confidence in the LORD.

Ver. 9. *Save, LORD, let the King hear us when we call.*] Let it be unto us, O LORD, according to our Desires, and our Hopes: Preserve our King; and in the Day when we cry unto thee for Help, make our Armies victorious.

PSALM XXI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret *truly observes, that in this Psalm, as well as the former*; David *(who was the Author of it, and delivered it to the Master of the Musick in the Tabernacle) speaks in the Person of the People: Whom he instructs how to give* GOD *Thanks (not for* Hezekiah's *Recovery from his great Sickness, and the lengthning of his Days, as* Theodoret *takes it, but) for granting him those Victories which they prayed for in the Psalm foregoing. And it is generally look'd upon as describing, under that Figure, the Exaltation, Glory and Majesty of* CHRIST, *which he obtained by his bloody Death and Passion. Many of the* Hebrews *themselves apply it to the* Messiah. *So that it may be called a Psalm of Triumph, after the Victories which* David *got over his Enemies; which were a Type of* CHRIST's *Victory over Death, and of the Triumph that insued. And truly there are some Things in it which are more literally fulfilled in* CHRIST, *than in* David; *as* v. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 1. *THE King shall joy in thy Strength,* O LORD, *and in thy Salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!*] Thou hast heard the Prayers of thy People, O LORD, when they cried unto thee, saying, LORD, *save the King*: (XX. 9.) Who will never cease therefore to thank thee, with the greatest Joy and Gladness, for that extraordinary Strength and Courage wherewith thou didst indue him. O how much beyond all his Expression is his Joy and Thankfulness, for thy wonderful Deliverance of him!

Ver. 2. *Thou hast given him his Heart's Desire, and hast not withholden the Request of his Lips. Selah.*] Thou hast granted all that his Heart desired; (XX. 4.) as well as that which he openly requested with his Lips.

Ver. 3. *For thou preventest him with the Blessings of Goodness: Thou settest a Crown of pure Gold on his Head.*] Yea, more than his Heart desired. For when he thought of no such Thing, thou wast graciously pleased to anoint him to a Kingdom: In which having settled him, thou hast added a new Glory to him, and set an illustrious Crown upon his Head. 1 *Chron.* XX. 2.

Ver. 4. *He asked Life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even Length of Days for ever and ever.*] He desired only to escape with his Life, when he was incompassed with inevitable Dangers: And thou moreover didst promise to prolong his Days; (2 *Sam.* VII. 12.) and to continue the Crown to his Posterity for many Generations: (*ibid.* v. 16, 19.) As thou wilt do to his Son CHRIST for ever and ever.

Ver. 5. *His Glory is great in thy Salvation: Honour and Majesty hast thou laid upon him.*] Great is the Fame also which he hath won by the many Victories thou hast given him: (2 *Sam.* VII. 9.) All Nations honour him, (as they shall much more do the *Messiah*,) and reverence that royal Majesty to which thou hast exalted him. (1 *Chron.* XIV. 2, 17.)

Ver. 6. *For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: Thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy Countenance.*] And, which is a far greater Glory, Thou hast not only bestowed extraordinary Benefits upon himself; but made him a Blessing to future Generations, whom thou wilt bless for his Sake. (1 *Kings* VIII. 19, 20, 56.)

By

By which ſpecial Favour and Token of thy Love to him, thou haſt raiſed him to the higheſt Pitch of Joy, as well as of Greatneſs.

Ver. 7. *For the King truſteth in the* LORD, *and through the Mercy of the moſt high he ſhall not be moved.*] Which ſhall never ceaſe to chear and refreſh his Spirit, becauſe he confides in him who never fails to perform his Promiſes: thro' his Kindneſs, who is ſuperiour to all, the Throne of *David* ſhall ſtand faſt, though all the Power on Earth ſhall combine to overturn it.

Ver. 8. *Thine Hand ſhall find out all thine Enemies, thy right Hand ſhall find out thoſe that hate thee.*] They are thy Enemies, O moſt High, as well as his, who endeavour to diſturb him; and they ſhall never eſcape thy Vengeance; whereſoever they skulk or fly for Safety, thy Vengeance ſhall purſue them, and puniſh their ſpightful Oppoſition to thee.

Ver. 9. *Thou ſhalt make them as a fiery Oven in the Time of thine Anger: the* LORD *ſhall ſwallow them up in his Wrath, and the Fire ſhall devour them.*] Wo be to them, when the Time comes wherein thou wilt call them to an Account for their Hatred to thee. They ſhall as certainly periſh, as if they were caſt into a fiery Oven: the LORD, who is juſtly incenſed againſt them, ſhall utterly conſume them with a ſharp and unavoidable Deſtruction.

Ver. 10. *Their Fruit ſhalt thou deſtroy from the Earth, and their Seed from among the Children of Men.*] They ſhall be ſo far from finding any Favour, that thou ſhalt quite extinguiſh their Families, and wholly aboliſh ſuch a wicked Generation;

Ver. 11. *For they intended evil againſt thee: they imagined a miſchievous Device,* which *they are not able* to perform.] Who intended to deſtroy thy Anointed, and root out thy Religion. Their Deſign was ſo miſchievous, and therefore they deſerve to be thus puniſhed; though they were not able to effect it.

Ver. 12. *Therefore ſhalt thou make them turn their Back,* when *thou ſhalt make ready* thine Arrows *upon thy Strings againſt the Face of them.*] It may moſt juſtly provoke thee, to ſet thy ſelf againſt them: and as their Aim, and the Bent of their Heart, was to throw down him whom thou haſt advanced; ſo to make them the Mark of thy ſevereſt Diſpleaſure, till they fall down wounded, and riſe no more.

Ver. 13. *Be thou exalted,* LORD, *in thine own Strength: ſo will we ſing and praiſe thy Power.*] Whereby all good Men ſhall be excited to extol thy Power; and therefore ſhew the Greatneſs of it, O LORD, and magnifie thy ſelf before their Eyes: And then, whatſoever others do, we, who are delivered by thee, will ſet forth thy Mightineſs in our Songs, and celebrate it with perpetual Praiſes.

PSALM XXII.

To the Chief Muſician upon *Aijeleth Sahar* *. A Pſalm of *David.*

* *Hinde of the Morning.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by David, *(and directed to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle,) wherein, under his own Perſon, (who was perſecuted as a Hinde is by the Hunters early in the Morning, v. 16.) he makes a large Deſcription of the Sufferings of* CHRIST; *and, in Concluſion, of his Exaltation, and the Propagation of his Kingdom to the utmoſt Ends of the Earth. Some of which Things are delivered in ſuch Expreſſions, that they are more literally fulfilled in our* Saviour, *than ever they were in* David; *to whom they belong, but in a metaphorical Senſe. I ſhall note the Particulars in their proper Places, underneath the Paraphraſe, which I would not too much inlarge, or interrupt, by inſerting them here.*

Ver. 1. MY GOD, *my* GOD, *why haſt thou forſaken me?* why art thou ſo *far from helping me,* and from *the Words of my roaring?*] O my GOD, my moſt gracious GOD, whoſe Power no Creature can reſiſt, how ſtrange doth it ſeem, that I, who have been thy Care ſo long, am now left without any viſible Means of eſcaping thoſe that ſeek my Life; and that the loudeſt Cries which I pour out of a Heart loaden with Sorrow and Grief, are far from prevailing for any Relief, *Matth.* XXVII. 46.

Ver. 2. *O my* GOD, *I cry in the Day-time, but thou heareſt not; and in the Night-ſeaſon, and am not ſilent.*] O my GOD, (for ſo I will ſtill call thee, even in the greateſt Diſtreſſes) there is no Day, no Night paſſes, wherein I do not, with inceſſant Cries, moſt importunately call upon thee: but can obtain no reſt from my Perſecutions.

Ver. 3. *But thou* art *holy,* O thou *that inhabiteſt the Praiſes of Iſrael.*] Yet thou art he, that hateſt all thoſe who unjuſtly perſecute thy Servant; and keepeſt thy Word moſt faithfully with them that depend upon thee: As appears by the many Deliverances thou haſt ſent them from thy holy Place, where they celebrate thy Name with their perpetual Praiſes.

Ver. 4. *Our Fathers truſted in thee: they truſted, and thou didſt deliver them.*] They that are gone before us, have left us many Remembrances of thy Mercy to thoſe that piouſly relied on thee: in all their Straits they applied themſelves unto thee, as their only Deliverer; and by thy Help they eſcaped the greateſt Dangers.

Ver. 5. *They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they truſted in thee, and were not confounded.*] Their fervent Prayers prevailed with thee: (though mine can now obtain no Audience:) they were confident thou wouldeſt preſerve them in Safety, and their Hope did not make them aſhamed.

Ver. 6. *But I* am *a Worm, and no Man; a Reproach of Men, and deſpiſed of the People.*] Whereas I, who have waited on thee alſo after their Example, am ſo diſappointed in my Expectation, that my Adverſaries are ready to tread me under their Feet: So weak I am, and thereby ſo contemptible, that not only the great Men, but the baſer Sort and Dregs of the People, publickly reproach and deſpiſe me.

Ver. 7. *All they that ſee me laugh me to Scorn: they ſhoot out the Lip; they ſhake the Head,* ſaying,] All that ſee the Straits to which I am re-

reduced, openly * deride me: they make Mouths at me, and, in a ſcornful Manner, ſhake their Heads, and jeſt upon me, ſaying;

[* *This was moſt exactly, and literally fulfilled in our Saviour* CHRIST, *Matth.* XXVII. 39, 43.]

Ver. 8. *He truſted on the* LORD, that *he would deliver him: let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him.*] This is he that talk'd ſo much of the Favour of GOD to him, and depended upon him that he would deliver him: Let us ſee now what he will do for him: let him deliver him out of our Hands, and ſhew thereby that he is ſo dear, as he pretends, unto him.

Ver. 9. *But thou* art *he that took me out of the Womb: thou didſt make me hope*, when I was *upon my Mother's Breaſts.*] This inſolent Language is very grievous to my Soul, but it ſhall not caſt me into utter Deſpair of thy Mercy: I will rather continue to wait upon thee, who, without my Knowledge, and when I could not call upon thee, didſt grant me a greater Deliverance than this which I now ask of thee: For thou broughteſt me out of my Mother's Womb, and then providedſt Nouriſhment for me, took'ſt a ſingular Care of me while I hung upon her Breaſts.

Ver. 10. *I was caſt upon thee from the Womb: Thou* art *my* GOD *from my Mother's Belly.*] In my Infancy thou didſt preſerve me from all the Miſchiefs to which that weak Eſtate is incident; and ever ſince haſt been my moſt gracious Protector: For from my firſt Coming into the World till this Moment, I have had nothing to truſt unto but only thy good Providence; which all along declared (though I was the youngeſt of my Brethren) what a large Share I had in thy loving Kindneſs.

Ver. 11. *Be not far from me, for Trouble* is *near*; *for* there is *none to help.*] And ſhall I think thou wilt now forſake me, when I call upon thee, and acknowledge thy former Care, and hope for thy future? Go on, O GOD, to conclude as thou haſt begun, and continue to do me Good. And now that there is an Appearance of the ſoreſt Diſtreſs, and I am no more able to help my ſelf than when I was an Infant, and have leſs Help and Succour from others; be thou pleaſed to exert thy Power, as thou haſt ever done, for my Deliverance.

Ver. 12. *Many Bulls have compaſſed me: Strong* Bulls *of Baſhan have beſet me round.*] It muſt be thy Work alone; for my Enemies are not only very numerous, but ſo mighty and formidable in their Power, ſo inſolent alſo and furious, and have incloſed and hemmed me in ſo ſtrictly, that it is impoſſible without thy miraculous Providence to eſcape them.

Ver. 13. *They gaped upon me* with *their Mouths*, as *a ravening and a roaring Lion.*] A hungry Lion is not more fierce nor more dreadful, when he is juſt ready to ſeize on his trembling Prey, than theſe my Perſecutors; whom I hear roaring and thundering out their Threats, and ſee coming with open Mouth to fall upon me, greedily deſiring and aiming to devour me.

Ver. 14. *I am poured out like Water, and all my Bones are out of Joint: My Heart is like Wax, it is melted in the midſt of my Bowels.*] Which have ſtruck me with ſuch Conſternation, that I am as weak as Water; my Bones are ſo looſed, that they are not able to ſupport my Body; my Heart fails me, and my Spirit diſſolves and faints away, as Wax melts before the Fire.

Ver. 15. *My Strength is dried up like a Potſherd; and my Tongue cleaveth to my Jaws: And thou haſt brought me into the Duſt of Death.*] Fear, Sadneſs and Sorrow have quite dried up my vital Moiſture; I have ſcarce Strength enough left to complain: But am juſt upon the Point to expire, and to be laid in my Grave.

Ver. 16. *For Dogs have compaſſed me, the Aſſembly of the Wicked have incloſed me: They pierced my Hands and my Feet.*] For that malicious Company, which have combined together to perſecute me, are as greedy and as cruel as the hungry Dogs, who have hunted down a Hinde, (*ſee the Title*) and are all gathered about her, to tear her in Pieces: They uſe me moſt ſhamefully, as well as cruelly, and have bored through my Hands and my Feet †.

[† *There is nothing like this in the Hiſtory of* David; *of whom it can be only ſpoken poetically by an* Hyperbole.]

Ver. 17. *I may tell all my Bones: They look* and *ſtare upon me.*] Grief and Sorrow have ſo conſumed my Fleſh, that my Bones ſtick out through my Skin, and may be diſtinctly numbered: And they that behold my Miſery, are ſo far from having Compaſſion on me, that they feed their Eyes, and are exceedingly ſatisfied with this lamentable Sight.

Ver. 18. *They part my Garments among them, and caſt Lots upon my Veſture.*] They make themſelves ſure I ſhall never recover; no more than the poor Hinde, whoſe Skin the Hunters have divided, or caſt Lots to whoſe Share it ſhall fall. For ſo have they parted my upper Garments among them, and caſt Lots who ſhall have my inner *.

[* *This alſo was more literally fulfilled in* CHRIST, *than in* David; *in whoſe Story we find nothing like it: And therefore it can ſignifie nothing more (if applied to him) than that they look'd upon him as utterly undone; and rifled his Houſe, and deſpoiled him of all when he fled from* Saul, 1 Sam. XIX.]

Ver. 19. *But be not thou far from me,* O LORD: *O my Strength, haſte thee to help me.*] Once more therefore I humbly beſeech thee, O LORD, to interpoſe by thy Power, in this grievous Straît, for my Deliverance: It is eaſie for thee to effect it, who art Almighty, and I depend merely on thy Aid; which I intreat thee to ſend ſpeedily for my Relief, or elſe it will come too late.

Ver. 20. *Deliver my Soul from the Sword: My Darling from the Power of the Dog.*] Reſcue my Life from the Sword, which the Enemy hath drawn to diſpatch me: It is all I have left, and it is left without all Defence but thine; who, I hope, wilt preſerve it from the Power of him, that with the Rage and Fury of a Dog maliciouſly perſecutes me.

Ver. 21. *Save me from the Lion's Mouth: For thou haſt heard me from the Horns of the Unicorns.*] Thou haſt done as great Things heretofore, and ſent me Relief when the fierceſt and ſtrongeſt Enemies were puſhing at me, and inſulting over me: Which makes me preſume of thy Favour now in this ſore Exigence, when the moſt violent Men are ready to fall upon me, and tear me in Pieces, if thou doſt not ſave me.

Ver. 22. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren: in the midſt of the Congregation will I praiſe thee.*]

thee.] Save me, O LORD, and it will redound to thy Praiſe, and not merely to my own Satisfaction: For * I will tell all my Brethren how good and gracious thou art; and publickly proclaim the Greatneſs of thy Power, and Wiſdom and Juſtice, (as well as of thy Love) in the midſt of thy faithful People.

[* *This* David *did in the XVIII Pſalm; and this our Saviour did by his Apoſtles,* (Heb. II. 12.) *who preached his Reſurrection, &c. every where, to the Praiſe and Glory of* GOD's *Grace.* Epheſ. I. 6.]

Ver. 23. *Ye that fear the* LORD, *praiſe him; all ye the Seed of Jacob, glorifie him; and fear him, all ye the Seed of Iſrael.*] I will call upon all the devout Worſhippers of the LORD, to join with me in praiſing and giving Thanks unto him. (1 *Chron.* XVI.) Let the whole Poſterity of *Jacob* (and whoſoever hath any thing of his Spirit in him) ſet forth the Glory of his moſt excellent Perfections, which ſhine in his marvellous Works: Let them all, I ſay, whom he hath choſen to be his peculiar People, moſt humbly worſhip and adore his Majeſty, and learn to give him faithful Obedience.

[*All that follows is as applicable to* CHRIST, *as to* David; *and ſome Paſſages more fulfilled in him.*]

Ver. 24. *For he hath not deſpiſed nor abhorred the Affliction of the afflicted: neither hath he hid his Face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.*] For that poor deſpicable Perſon (whom Men contemned and ſcorned, v. 6, 7.) he hath not diſdained to look graciouſly upon, in his loweſt and vileſt Condition. But tho' he ſeemed to neglect him for a Time, hath ſeaſonably appeared in his Favour, and granted the earneſt Prayers which he put up unto him in his Diſtreſs.

Ver. 25. *My Praiſe* ſhall be *of thee in the great Congregation: I will pay my Vows before them that fear him.*] Which ſhall be openly acknowledged, when I return to thy Houſe with the heartieſt Praiſes to thee; from whom, I am ſenſible, I receive all the Bleſſings I enjoy. And as I have been forward in my Trouble, to vow thee many Sacrifices, if thou wouldſt reſtore me; ſo I will certainly offer them in the Preſence of thoſe that devoutly worſhip the Divine Majeſty.

Ver. 26. *The meek ſhall eat and be ſatisfied: they ſhall praiſe the* LORD *that ſeek him; your Heart ſhall live for ever.*] I will invite alſo thoſe poor People, who were Partakers with me in my Sufferings, to come and feaſt with me on that plentiful Proviſion I will make for them; and thereby incourage all thoſe that ſeek the LORD ſincerely, and depend upon him, to hope that they ſhall alſo praiſe him. Let me aſſure all ſuch faithful Souls, your Hearts ſhall be always full of Comfort and Joy, which nothing ſhall be able to take away from you.

Ver. 27. *All the Ends of the World ſhall remember and turn unto the* LORD: *and all the Kindreds of the Nations ſhall worſhip before thee.*] Nor ſhall the Fame of thy wonderful Works, O LORD, be confined within the narrow Bounds of this one Country; but ſpread it ſelf to the farthermoſt Parts of the Earth: where they ſhall, with thankful Commemorations of thy Goodneſs, univerſally proſtrate themſelves before thee, and become thy Subjects.

Ver. 28. *For the Kingdom* is *the* LORD's: *and he* is *the Governour among the Nations.*] For the LORD is the Sovereign of the whole World: and therefore as all Nations are under his Dominion, ſo they ſhall all ſubmit unto his Government.

Ver. 29. *All* they that be *fat upon Earth, ſhall eat and worſhip: all they that go down to the Duſt, ſhall bow before him, and none can keep alive his own Soul.*] All they that are rich and powerful ſhall partake of his Altar, * and humbly worſhip him that beſtows ſuch Benefits upon them: And ſo ſhall all the Poor and Miſerable alſo think themſelves happy in his Service. For he is the Protector of them all; and the greateſt, as well as the meaneſt, muſt acknowledge, that of him alone cometh their Salvation.

[* *As they that eat of the Sacrifices did,* 1 Cor. X. 18.]

Ver. 30. *A Seed ſhall ſerve him, it ſhall be accounted to the* LORD *for a Generation.*] Their Poſterity likewiſe ſhall devote themſelves unto him, and propagate his Religion unto future Generations; whom the LORD ſhall adopt into his Family.

Ver. 31. *They ſhall come, and ſhall declare his Righteouſneſs unto a People that ſhall be born, that he hath done* this.] They ſhall joyn themſelves to the Society of his People; and publiſh to thoſe that ſhall ſucceed them, the Loving-kindneſs and the Faithfulneſs of the LORD, in this wonderful Deliverance, which he alone hath wrought for me.

PSALM XXIII.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm ſeems to have been compoſed by David, *after* GOD *had brought him out of that great Diſtreſs, of which he complained in the foregoing, and ſettled him in a proſperous Condition: wherein he was confident* GOD *would continue him.*

Ver. 1. THE LORD *is my Shepherd, I ſhall not want.*] There is no Shepherd exerciſes a more tender and conſtant Care over his Flock, than the LORD doth over me: and therefore I am confident I ſhall not want any Thing that is neceſſary, either for my Suſtenance, or for my Defence againſt thoſe who would bereave me of my Happineſs.

Ver. 2. *He maketh me to lie down in green Paſtures: he leadeth me beſide the ſtill Waters.*] For as a good Shepherd leads his Sheep in the violent Heat to ſhady Places, where they may lie down and feed (not in parched, but) in freſh and green Paſtures; and in the Evening leads them (not to muddy and troubled Waters, but) to pure and quiet Streams: So hath he already made a fair and plentiful Proviſion for me; which I enjoy in Peace without any Diſturbance.

Ver. 3. *He reſtoreth my Soul; he leadeth me in the Paths of Righteouſneſs for his Names Sake.*] And leſt I ſhould loſe ſo great a Happineſs, his Goodneſs is pleaſed (for to nothing elſe can I aſcribe it) both to direct and guide me in the right

right Courſe of pious Living; and to reduce me when I go aſtray: juſt as a Shepherd brings back his wandring Sheep, from thoſe craggy, untrodden Paths, wherein they would loſe themſelves; and leads them into plain and eaſie Ways, wherein they find Reſt and Safety.

Ver. 4. *Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil: for thou* art *with me, thy Rod and thy Staff they comfort me.*] Which makes me reſolve to take a good Courage, though I ſhould fall again into the moſt diſmal Dangers, (as a poor Sheep ſometimes doth into a deep Pit:) it ſhall not terrify me, when I remember that thou art preſent with me to protect and defend me: Thy Royal Power, and Paſtoral Care, ſhall be my Support and Comfort.

Ver. 5. *Thou preparest a Table before me in the Preſence of mine Enemies: thou anointeſt my Head with Oyl, my Cup runneth over.*] But (ſuch is thy extraordinary Kindneſs to me) thou haſt not merely provided Food, but a Feaſt for me; a moſt ſumptuous Feaſt, which, with great Care and Order, thou haſt ſet before me, to the Aſtoniſhment of my Enemies: who with Shame and Grief behold me, whom they lately deſpiſed, rejoycing in thy Royal Bounty towards me, which entertains me even with Superfluity of all good Things.

Ver. 6. *Surely Goodneſs and Mercy ſhall follow me all the Days of my Life: and I will dwell in the Houſe of the* LORD *for ever.*] And therefore I am bold to hope, that the ſame bounteous Goodneſs and tender Mercy, which hath without my Deſert done all this for me, and purſues me as zealouſly with its Favour, as my Enemies do with their Malice, will ſtill moſt graciouſly attend me to the End of my Days; and ſettle me in a quiet Enjoyment of his Houſe, (as well as my own:) where I will never ceaſe to praiſe his wonderful Love towards me, and to give him Thanks for all the Benefits he hath beſtowed upon his unworthy Servant.

PSALM XXIV.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

As the foregoing Pſalm ſeems to have been made by David *preſently after his Settlement in his Kingdom; ſo this, it is moſt likely, was penn'd by him, when he brought the Ark from the Houſe of* Obed-Edom, *and ſettled it (after many Flittings and Removals) in Mount* Zion. *Which Place, upon that Account, he prefers before all the reſt of the World: and excites the People, who attended the Ark thither with extraordinary Pomp and Solemnity, not to content themſelves merely with that Sort of Piety; but to add the Practice of all Moral Vertue: That ſo they might enjoy the Bleſſings which might be expected from the Divine Preſence with them; and comfortably wait for the Coming of the* Meſſiah. *Whoſe Aſcenſion to Heaven is repreſented by the carrying of the Ark up into Mount* Zion; *which was a Type of Heaven, as the Ark was of the Lord* CHRIST.

The Hebrews *(from whom ſome Copies of the* LXX. *add in the Title,* ἐκ μιᾶς σαββάτων) *were wont to ſing this Pſalm on the* First Day of the Week; *(ſee the Argument of* Pſal. *XCIII.) becauſe, as ſome fanſy, there is mention, in the Beginning of it, of the Creation of the Earth; which* Moſes *ſays was on that Day: But rather, I ſhould think, becauſe therein their Prophets and Wiſe-men ſaw a Prophecy of* CHRIST; *whoſe firſt Step to the Throne of his Glory was upon the firſt Day of the Week, when we conſtantly commemorate his Reſurrection. And there is ſo remarkable a Difference between the 8th Verſe and the 10th, that we may juſtly think ſome new Thing is intended in the 9th and 10th Verſes, which are a Repetition of the 7th and 8th,* viz. *The Aſcenſion of our Lord* CHRIST. *For in the Beginning of the Verſe, the Queſtion is put with great Emphaſis,* Who is this King of Glory? *And in the latter End of the Words,* Mighty in Battle, *are omitted: becauſe in the Days of* CHRIST, *as* Aben Ezra *himſelf gives the Account, Men are* to turn their Swords into Plow-ſhares, *&c.*

Ver. 1. THE *Earth is the* LORD'S, *and the Fulneſs thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein.*] What a Favour is this, that the Divine Majeſty will vouchſafe to take up his ſpecial Reſidence here among us! when the whole Earth is his, and all the Creatures wherewith it is fill'd, this great World, and all the People that inhabit it.

Ver. 2. *For he hath founded it upon the Seas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the Floods.*] For by his Almighty Power it was form'd, and therefore he hath a juſt Propriety in it. He hath ſettled it alſo ſo firmly, that though the Seas and the Rivers beat againſt it, they cannot overwhelm it; but together with it, make a convenient Dwelling for thoſe that live in every Part of it.

Ver. 3. *Who ſhall aſcend into the Hill of the* LORD? *and who ſhall ſtand in his holy Place?*] And, bleſſed be GOD, we dwell in that Part of the Earth, where he himſelf hath fixed his Royal Palace. (For this is the Mountain that he hath choſen and ſeparated from all other, to be the Place of his ſpecial Preſence.) But who is worthy to appear before him? Who may hope to be admitted to a gracious Audience with him?

Ver. 4. *He that hath clean Hands, and a pure Heart; who hath not lift up his Soul unto Vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully.*] Not every one that lives in this happy Country, (tho' choſen to be his peculiar People) but he that carefully keeps his Commands in Thought, and Deed, and Word. He, I ſay, who not only preſerves his Hands pure from Murther and Theft, and ſuch like injurious Actions, but his Heart alſo from ſo much as deſigning them; who uſes no Lyes, much leſs falſe Oaths, to deceive his Neighbour, and enrich himſelf; but religiouſly obſerves all his Promiſes, eſpecially thoſe that are made in GOD'S Preſence, though it be to his own Detriment.

Ver. 5. *He ſhall receive the Bleſſing from the* LORD, *and Righteouſneſs from the* GOD *of his Salva-*

Salvation.] This is the Worſhipper, and he alone, who ſhall receive a Bleſſing, not only from the Prieſt, (when he comes out of the Sanctuary;) but from the LORD himſelf; who will faithfully keep his Promiſes with them, and amply reward them who are thus faithful to him.

Ver. 6. *This is the Generation of them that ſeek him; that ſeek thy Face, O Jacob. Selah.*] This is the genuine People of GOD, whoſe Prayers are like to prevail with him. Such ſhould all thoſe Proſelytes be, who ſeek the Favour of being received into your Communion, O ye Children of *Jacob*.

Ver. 7. *Liſt up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye liſt up, ye everlaſting Doors, and the King of Glory ſhall come in.*] And let all thoſe who thus follow the LORD, (not merely with their Bodies, but with their Hearts) in this ſolemn Entrance he now makes into the holy Place, join with me, and ſay, Be ye open, O ye Gates of the Sanctuary; ſtand wide open, ye durable Doors, and the King of incomparable Majeſty will enter, and, by the ſpecial Token of his Preſence, dwell among us.

Ver. 8. *Who is this King of Glory? the* LORD *ſtrong and mighty, the* LORD *mighty in Battel.*] And if any ask, who this King is, whoſe Majeſty we proclaim to be ſo tranſcendent; let them know, it is the LORD, who made and governs the World; that moſt mighty and invincible LORD, by whoſe Preſence with me I have been victorious in ſo many Battels.

Ver. 9. *Liſt up your Heads, O ye Gates, even liſt* them *up, ye everlaſting Doors, and the King of Glory ſhall come in.*] Therefore make no Delay, O ye Gates of the [*Heavenly*] Sanctuary; be ye open, wide open, O ye Doors, which never ſhall decay; and the King of incomparable Majeſty, as I ſaid, ſhall enter, and fix his Seat in this holy Place.

Ver. 10. *Who is this King of Glory? The* LORD *of Hoſts, he is the King of Glory. Selah.*] And if you ask again (as there is Reaſon) with greater Admiration, Who is this †, the King of incomparable Majeſty? known that the LORD of the Sun, Moon and Stars, yea, of all the angelical Powers; he is the King, whoſe tranſcendent Majeſty is come to make his Reſidence here.

† [*See the Argument.*]

PSALM XXV.

A Pſalm of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm ſeems to have been penned by David *after the Commiſſion of ſome great Sin,* (v. 11.) *and in ſome great Diſtreſs, whereinto he was fallen,* (v. 15, 16.) *probably after the Matter of* Urijah, *and when* Abſalom *rebelled againſt him. Which brought to Mind all the Offences of his Youth,* (v. 7.) *and made him an earneſt Supplicant for the Pardon of them, and for Deliverance from his Enemies. He began to make this Petition with an extraordinary Art; but the Method is preſently diſturbed, by the Ardency of his Deſires, and his paſſionate Sorrow, which would not let him follow exactly the Order of the Letters of the Alphabet, in the Beginning of every Verſe, as he firſt deſigned.*

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee, O* LORD, *do I lift up my Soul.*] O LORD, my conſtant and only Refuge in all my Troubles, I look up unto thee in this Diſtreſs; moſt humbly waiting on thee, and hoping in thee, that thou wilt deliver me.

Ver. 2. *O my* GOD, *I truſt in thee, let me not be aſhamed: Let not mine Enemies triumph over me.*] Thou knoweſt, O my GOD, that I place no Confidence in any Thing but thine Almighty Goodneſs, upon which I profeſs entirely to depend: And therefore do not fail to relieve me, leſt I hang down my Head in confuſion of Face, and my Enemies inſult over me, when they ſee me diſappointed of the Help which I have ſo often declared I expect from thee.

Ver. 3. *Yea, let none that wait on thee be aſhamed: Let them be aſhamed which tranſgreſs without Cauſe.*] Yea, for their Sakes, who, by my Example, wait upon thee, do not deny me: Let not thoſe who take my Part, and place the ſame Confidence in thee that I do, be diſappointed of their Hopes; but let them be utterly defeated, who againſt all Law, and all Obligations, have broke their Faith with me, and without any Provocation vainly labour to deſtroy me.

Ver. 4. *Shew me thy Ways, O* LORD: *Teach me thy Paths.*] It is hard to know what to do in theſe difficult Times, eſpecially in this great Agitation of Thoughts, wherein my troubled Mind is toſſed up and down: Therefore do thou be pleaſed, O LORD, to ſhew me the Courſe thou wouldeſt have me take; and govern my Actions ſo, that they may be pleaſing unto thee.

Ver. 5. *Lead me in thy Truth, and teach me: For thou* art *the* GOD *of my Salvation, on thee do I wait all the Day.*] I have as much need of thy Guidance, as a little Child hath of its Parents; and I cry as earneſtly to thee, that thou wilt direct me in every Step: And eſpecially that thou wilt preſerve me as faithful to thee, as I doubt not thou wilt be to me: For thou art the Author of all the Deliverances I have received; and on thee I have with a conſtant and perſeverant Hope depended in all my Trials.

Ver. 6. *Remember, O* LORD, *thy tender Mercies, and thy loving Kindneſſes: For they* have been *ever of Old.*] Who art ready to help the Miſerable, when they humbly ſeek thee, that all Ages have left us Remembrances of thy moſt compaſſionate Bounty towards them. And therefore I beſeech thee to do to meas thou haſt ever done: I beg no new Thing of thee, but implore that Clemency and Mercy, which thou never yet deniedſt to any pious Supplicant.

Ver. 7. *Remember not the Sins of my Youth, nor my Tranſgreſſions: According to thy Mercy, remember thou me, for thy Goodneſs Sake, O* LORD.] I am a Sinner indeed, and began to be ſo very early; for in my Youth I childiſhly and fooliſhly went aſtray from thee; and ſince that Time have committed much more grievous Offences. But thy Goodneſs is ſo great, that thou art not wont to puniſh us according to our Deſerts, but to pardon us according to thy tender Mer-

Mercies; to which I now betake my self, beseeching thee not to consider the Greatness of my Sins, but only the Largeness and Freeness of thy Mercy, which gives me Hope thou wilt be graciously reconciled to me.

Ver. 8. *Good and upright is the* LORD: *therefore will he teach Sinners in the Way.*] For such is the Loving-kindness of the LORD, such is his Love to Rectitude and Holiness; that he will rather chuse to reduce Sinners, and instruct them in the Way of Vertue, than destroy them because they have wandred from it.

Ver. 9. *The meek will he guide in Judgment: and the meek will he teach his Way.*] If they repent, that is, and, being troubled for what they have done amiss, meekly submit to his Will and Pleasure; he will sweetly direct them to discern what is acceptable to him. Such humble Souls will be apt to learn, and therefore he will not fail to teach them the Way to recover his Favour.

Ver. 10. *All the Paths of the* LORD are *Mercy and Truth, unto such as keep his Covenant and his Testimonies.*] And when they carefully observe the Covenant wherein they stand engaged to him, (by obeying his Laws, which testify what his Will and Pleasure is) he will order and dispose all Things for their Good, and faithfully perform the Promises he hath made to such dutiful Servants.

Ver. 11. *For thy Names Sake, O* LORD, *pardon mine Iniquity: for it is great.*] I beseech thee therefore again, by this Mercy and Faithfulness of thine, which shall be always celebrated and praised by me, to grant me a gracious Pardon: For which I am the more earnest, because my Sin is so foul, so heinous, and such a multiplied Wickedness, that I can have no Rest till thou art reconciled to me.

Ver. 12. *What Man is he that feareth the* LORD? *him shall he teach in the Way that he shall chuse.*] Which if thou wilt be, O how happy shall I think my self! For he that fears to offend thy Majesty, (as I in all Reason ought hereafter to do, both because I on no other Terms expect thy merciful Pardon, and have felt also the sad Burthen of being a Sinner) him will the LORD instruct, and lead into those Ways which are conformable to his blessed Will, and which will prove most grateful to him that walks in them.

Ver. 13. *His Soul shall dwell at Ease: and his Seed shall inherit the Earth.*] He shall be at Ease within himself, or rather filled with Joy, and all Manner of Satisfaction: None of the Blessings of this Life shall be wanting to him, and he shall leave them as an Inheritance to his Posterity after him.

Ver. 14. *The Secret of the* LORD *is with them that fear him: and he will shew them his Covenant.*] Or if he fall into any Straits and Difficulties, the greatest Comfort of all is, that the LORD is present to them that fear to do any Thing displeasing to him, (though it were to deliver themselves from Danger) to counsel, and secretly suggest good Advice unto them: For he hath engaged himself to shew them what is best for their Safety and Preservation.

Ver. 15. *Mine Eyes are ever towards the* LORD, *for he shall pluck my Feet out of the Net.*] In Confidence of which my Mind is fixed in a constant Dependance upon the LORD: I expect no Help from any one else, but on him will I patiently wait, for I believe he will wind me out of these Perplexities, and deliver me from the Snares which my Enemies have laid for me.

Ver. 16. *Turn thee unto me, and have Mercy upon me: for I am desolate and afflicted.*] Behold, O LORD, how entirely I trust in thee: Have a Respect to my Faith, and Hope, and Patience, and take Pity upon me, now that thou seest I am in a Manner forsaken by all, and reduced from the Estate of a King to the Condition of a Beggar.

Ver. 17. *The Troubles of my Heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my Distresses.*] Great are the Oppressions that lie upon my Heart, and they are still growing into new Cares, and Fears, and vexatious Thoughts: O deliver me out of such grievous Straits which press so sore upon me.

Ver. 18. *Look upon mine Affliction, and my Pain, and forgive all my Sins.*] Have Compassion upon the miserable and toilsome Life which I lead, and remove all my Sins out of thy Sight, which I know are the Cause of it.

Ver. 19. *Consider mine Enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with cruel Hatred.*] Discountenance my Enemies; who (as they are very numerous, so) bear an implacable Hatred to me; which dispose them to do me all the Mischief imaginable, tho' I have not been in the least injurious to them.

Ver. 20. *O keep my Soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed, for I put my Trust in thee.*] O preserve me from falling into their Hands, for they seek my Life, and rescue me from the Danger I am now in of losing it: And let not (I again most humbly beseech thee) the Trust and Confidence which I repose in thee, be turned into Shame and Confusion, as it will be, if thou dost not deliver me.

Ver. 21. *Let Integrity and Uprightness preserve me: for I wait on thee.*] I have grievously offended thy Majesty, it is true, and I have sorrowfully bewailed it: but as for them that rise up against me, they have so little Reason to accuse me, that I desire thee to deal with me according to my Uprightness and Integrity, in all my Administrations: Let my Innocency be my Guard, and my honest Dealing my Protection; for I depend on nothing but thy Favour in such Courses.

Ver. 22. *Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his Troubles.*] Nor do I plead my own private Cause alone, but beseech thee to have Mercy upon the whole Nation, who are lamentably distracted by these Divisions: and to restore them to Peace and Quietness, by delivering me from this Rebellion that is raised against me.

PSALM XXVI.

A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

In this Psalm David *asserts that Uprightness and Integrity, to which he pretended in the 21st Verse of the foregoing Psalm; and appeals to* GOD *as the Judge of his Sincerity, who was privy*

privy to his most secret Intentions. But it seems to relate to former Times, when he was persecuted by Saul, and look'd upon as a publick Enemy, 1 Sam. XXIV. 9. *Thus* Theodoret *understands it: and thinks he was now among the* Philistines, *or in some other strange Country, into which he was some Time forced by that Persecution.*

Ver. 1. *Judge me, O* Lord, *for I have walked in mine Integrity; I have trusted also in the* Lord, *therefore I shall not slide.*] I am accused of grievous Crimes by those that persecute me; but am not afraid to appeal to thee, O Lord, as the Judge of that Matter; nothing doubting but thou wilt acquit me, and punish my false Accusers and Persecutors. For, thou knowest, I kept a good Conscience when I was at Court; (1 *Sam.* XIX. 4.) and since I have been banish'd thence, have taken no wicked Course to deliver my self: (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 11, 12.) but intirely depended upon thee alone for Safety: in which Resolution nothing shall shake me.

Ver. 2. *Examine me, O* Lord, *and prove me; try my Reins and my Heart.*] Thou seest into the secret Thoughts of my Mind, and Inclinations of my Will: If I have not sufficiently approved my self, to have not so much as designed any such Evil as I am charged withal, go on, good Lord, to make a further Search; and if thou wilt still expose me to the fiery Trial of sorer Afflictions, I hope it will only still discover more of my Integrity.

Ver. 3. *For thy Loving-kindness is before mine Eyes: and I have walked in thy Truth.*] For I trust to nothing but thy Loving-kindness, which is the Pattern I have set before my Eyes to imitate: I ever designed Good, not Hurt, to them; and have ever kept my Faith, and punctually performed my Promises to them; after the Example of thy Truth, by which I have squar'd all my Actions.

Ver. 4. *I have not sat with vain Persons, neither will I go in with Dissemblers.*] I never loved the Company of false and treacherous Persons; nor have had any Thing to do with those, who under specious Shows cover ungodly Designs.

Ver. 5. *I have hated the Congregation of evil Doers: and will not set with the wicked.*] No, I perfectly hated their Meetings, where they laid their Heads together to contrive some evil thing or other: I never did, nor ever will, sit in Consultation with those unquiet and turbulent Spirits, who are restlesly hatching Mischief.

Ver. 6. *I will wash mine Hands in Innocency: so will I compass thine Altar, O* Lord.] I never satisfied my self with the mere Ceremony of washing my Hands, before I went to offer thee any Sacrifice: But sincerely endeavoured, O Lord, to keep my self free from all Impurity, (as by that Token I testified) and so presented my self, with due Reverence, at thy Altar.

Ver. 7. *That I may publish with the Voice of Thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous Works.*] Not merely to pray to thee, when I was in any Distress; but to praise thee also, and to give thee Thanks; proclaiming to all thy People, those stupendous Things, which thy admirable Goodness hath done for me.

Ver. 8. Lord, *I have loved the Habitation of thy House, and the Place where thine Honour dwelleth.*] And thou knowest, O Lord, with what Affection I attended upon this Employment; and how glad I was to go into thy Tabernacle, (which thou hast been pleased to make the Place where thy Glory dwells among us,) to offer those devout Sacrifices unto thee.

Ver. 9. *Gather not my Soul with Sinners, nor my Life with bloody Men;*] And therefore, I hope, thou wilt not let me suffer with those, from whose Society I have always separated my self: O let me not perish, as if I was a Murtherer;

Ver. 10. *In whose Hands is Mischief, and their right Hand is full of Bribes.*] Or a Companion of those that live by Rapine and Spoil of others: (1 *Sam.* XXV. 15, 16.) or obtain their Ends by Bribery and Corruption of Justice.

Ver. 11. *But as for me, I will walk in mine Integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.*] For I am none of that Number; but have alway preserved, and will still continue an upright Endeavour to keep my self pure in all Things: Therefore, I beseech thee, to deliver me, now that they seek to destroy me as an Evil-doer; and shew that thou judgest otherways of me.

Ver. 12. *My Foot standeth in an even Place: in the Congregation will I bless the* Lord.] Why should I doubt of it, when, notwithstanding all the Assaults of my Enemies, I stand firm and unshaken? Surely the Time will come, when I shall publickly praise the Lord, my Protector and Deliverer, in the Assemblies of his People; from whence this unjust Persecution hath driven me. 1 *Sam.* XXVI. 19.

PSALM XXVII.

A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, *when he was, or had been lately, in some great Distress. It is not easie to resolve, whether it were when he was persecuted by* Saul *before he was crowned; (as the LXX. now say, tho' Theodoret could find no such Thing in the Hexaplus;) or when he was forced to fly from* Absalom; *or, as some of the Jews think (which seems most probable, because it agrees very well with several Passages in the Psalm,) when, in Fight with the* Philistines, *he had engaged himself so far among the Enemies, that he was in Danger of being killed by a Giant, if* Abishai *had not seasonably stept in and relieved him. This was in his declining Years, when the same Courage remained, but not the same Strength, which he had in his Youth. And therefore the People came and sware to him, saying,* Thou shalt go out no more with us to Battel, that thou quench not the Lamp of Israel, 2 *Sam.* XXI. 17.

Ver. 1. THE Lord *is my Light, and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? the* Lord *is the Strength of my Life, of whom shall I be afraid?*] The Lord still bears a Favour to me,

me, and fills me with Joy by his wonderful Preſervation of me. What Enemy then is ſo terrible, that I ſhould not dare to engage him? He defends my Life in the moſt dangerous Aſſaults; of whom then, though he be never ſo great a Giant, ſhould I ſtand in Fear?

Ver. 2. *When the Wicked, even mine Enemies and my Foes, came upon me to eat up my Fleſh, they ſtumbled and fell.*] When malicious Men, full of Hatred and Rage, made their Approaches ſo near me, that they hoped, like ſo many ſavage Beaſts, to tear me in Pieces and devour me; they quite miſſed their Aim, and fell down dead at my Feet.

Ver. 3. *Though an Hoſt ſhould encamp againſt me, my Heart ſhall not fear: Though War ſhould riſe againſt me, in this will I be confident.*] And therefore, though I ſhould ſee my ſelf beſieged with a great Army of Enemies, it ſhall not diſmay me: Though I were to fight a Battel with the moſt numerous Forces, I ſhall not, after ſuch a Demonſtration of GOD's Love and careful Providence over me, deſpair of Victory.

Ver. 4. *One Thing have I deſired of the* LORD, *that will I ſeek after; that I may dwell in the Houſe of the* LORD, *all the Days of my Life, to behold the Beauty of the* LORD, *and to enquire in his Temple.*] Not that I am greedy of Glory and Fame, by ſuch marvellous Succeſſes: No, I can ſtay at home, as my People deſire me, (2 *Sam.* XXI. 17.) and give GOD Thanks for what he hath done for me. Nothing in the World agrees ſo much with my Deſires: This is the only Thing I have ſought, (even by my Wars,) and will ſtill make the End of all my Endeavours, that I may perpetually attend upon the Service of GOD in the holy Aſſemblies; and enjoy the ſweet Pleaſure the LORD is pleaſed there to impart to his People, and receive Directions from him, when I wait upon him every Morning in his Tabernacle.

Ver. 5. *For in the Time of Trouble he ſhall hide me in his Pavilion: In the Secret of his Tabernacle ſhall he hide me, he ſhall ſet me up upon a Rock.*] For there I ſhall think my ſelf as ſecure in troubleſome Times, as if I was inviron'd with the ſtrongeſt Bulwarks, or lay obſcured in the moſt ſecret Hiding-places: The moſt impregnable Rock I ſhould not take to be a Place of greater Safety.

Ver. 6. *And now ſhall mine Head be lifted up above mine Enemies round about me: Therefore will I offer in his Tabernacle Sacrifices of Joy; I will ſing, yea, I will ſing Praiſes unto the* LORD.] And now I have felt the happy Fruit of my Love towards it; for the LORD hath given me a glorious Victory, and made me triumph over all my Enemies on every Side. For which Cauſe I will go thither, and offer Sacrifices of Thankſgiving with the higheſt Expreſſions of Joy: I will compoſe Songs of Praiſe, and therein ſet forth the Power and Loving-kindneſs of the LORD.

Ver. 7. *Hear, O* LORD, *when I cry with my Voice: Have Mercy alſo upon me, and anſwer me.*] On whom I ſtill depend for my future Preſervation; beſeeching thee, O LORD, to give me a gracious Audience: Whenſoever I addreſs my ſelf unto thee, ſhew then the Kindneſs thou haſt for me, by granting my Deſire.

Ver. 8. When thou ſaidſt, *Seek ye my Face; my Heart ſaid unto thee, Thy Face,* LORD, *will I ſeek.*] Which I do not preſume to offer to thee, without thy Invitation; but have ſtill thy own Words in my Mind, whereby thou exhorteſt us to come unto thee, ſaying, *Seek ye my Face:* To which my Heart anſwers, Behold, O LORD, in Obedience to thy Command, and by thy gracious Motion, I will never ceaſe to ſeek it.

Ver. 9. *Hide not thy Face far from me, put not thy Servant away in Anger: Thou haſt been my Help, leave me not, neither forſake me, O* GOD *of my Salvation.*] And thou, I hope, wilt look favourably upon me: and not withdraw thy Preſence from me, when I beg thy Protection or Aſſiſtance. Do not then in Anger reject my Suits, becauſe I am a Sinner; but accept them becauſe I am thy Servant: Whom in former Times thou haſt ſo often relieved, that from thence alſo I am emboldned to beſeech thee not to deſert me, O LORD; but (as thou haſt begun, ſo) continue to give me Deliverance and Safety.

Ver. 10. *When my Father and my Mother forſake me, then the* LORD *will take me up.*] The Indulgence of my Parents is not to be compared with thy moſt tender Affection: But though they, and all the Friends I have, ſhould abandon me, I would hope the LORD would take me into his Care, and not ſuffer me to periſh:

Ver. 11. *Teach me thy Way, O* LORD, *and lead me in a plain Path, becauſe of mine Enemies.*] As I certainly ſhall, if thou leaveſt me to my ſelf. For, alas! I know not what Courſe it is beſt for me to take for my Safety: And therefore beſeech thee to vouchſafe me thy Direction; and enable me to walk ſo circumſpectly and evenly, that they who narrowly pry into all my Actions, and watch for my halting, may have no Advantage againſt me.

Ver. 12. *Deliver me not over unto the Will of mine Enemies: For falſe Witneſſes are riſen up againſt me, and ſuch as breath out Cruelty.*] Let not thoſe have their Will of me, who love to trouble me, and give me perpetual Diſturbance; as too many ſtill do, notwithſtanding all the wonderful Things thou haſt wrought for me. They ceaſe not to calumniate and defame my Government, and he that heads them, and ſets them on, ſpeaks of open Force and Violence, if he had Opportunity.

Ver. 13. I had fainted, *unleſs I had believed to ſee the Goodneſs of* LORD *in the Land of the Living.*] Good GOD! how had it been poſſible for me to ſupport my ſelf under ſo many Troubles and Fears, which follow one upon another; if I had not firmly truſted in thee, that, notwithſtanding the reſtleſs Malice of my Enemies, I ſhall enjoy thee, in a proſperous and happy Condition, even here in this preſent Life?

Ver. 14. *Wait on the* LORD: *Be of good Courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine Heart: Wait, I ſay, on the* LORD.] And let me admoniſh thee, whoſoever thou art that ſhalt hereafter fall into any ſuch Straits, to learn by my Example, not to be impatient, nor deſpond preſently, much leſs deſpair of Relief, if the LORD do not lend it juſt when thou expecteſt it: But wait upon him ſtill with a ſtedfaſt Hope, and fortify thy ſelf with a ſtrong Faith in him. Let not thy Heart fail thee in the greateſt Danger; but, as I ſaid,

wait

wait upon the LORD, and confidently expect, that in his good Time he will relieve thee.

PSALM XXVIII.

A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret *thinks this Psalm was composed by* David *during* Saul's *Persecution; when he was betrayed by those whom he took for Friends, or not for his Enemies; such as* Doeg, *the* Ziphites, *and many others. But the Matter of the Psalm inclines me to consider it as a Meditation, on some such Occasion as moved him to pen the foregoing. For he blesses* GOD *in the latter Part of it,* (v. 7, 8.) *for the Victories he had got over his Enemies, and for the Peace he enjoyed: and yet complains in the Beginning of it, of some Men who molested him, and sought an Occasion to do him a Mischief. See* 2 Sam. *XXI.* 18, 19, 20. *where we read of three Battels between his Forces and the* Philistines, *after that mentioned in the Argument of Psalm XXVII. when it is likely, some of his own Subjects took an Opportunity to give him some Disturbance.*

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee will I cry, O* LORD, *my Rock, be not silent to me: lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the Pit.*] O LORD, to whom alone I betake my self for Safety, and under whose Protection nothing can hurt me; I make my most earnest Prayer unto thee, that thou wilt defend me. Do not deny me, I most humbly beseech thee; least while I am so importunate with thee, and confide so intirely in thee, and yet thou takest no Notice of me, I look like one that is abandoned by thee to Destruction.

Ver. 2. *Hear the Voice of my Supplications when I cry unto thee: when I lift up my Hands toward thy holy Oracle.*] Grant my Desires therefore, when with ardent Affection I seek thy Favour, and, renouncing all Dependance on humane Succour, implore thy Help; which thou art wont to send from thy holy Place.

Ver. 3. *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the Workers of Iniquity: which speak Peace to their Neighbours, but Mischief is in their Heart.*] Let not that Destruction seize on me, which is the Portion of the Wicked: nor suffer me to be involved in the same Punishment with those pernicious Wretches, who make no Conscience what Villanies they commit; and yet pretend the greatest Friendship to their Neighbours, when they design and are contriving their Ruin.

Ver. 4. *Give them according to their Deeds, and according to the Wickedness of their Endeavours: give them after the Work of their Hands, render to them their Desert.*] It is fit that they suffer as they have done, and reap the Fruit of their manifold Wickedness: dispense a Reward to them according to their Works; and deal with them (which is the Measure whereby I desire thou wilt proceed with me) as they have dealt with others.

Ver. 5. *Because they regard not the Works of the* LORD, *nor the Operation of his Hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.*] I know thou wilt: Because they regard not the wonderful Things thou hast done for me, and by me; particularly that great Work (which is to be ascribed to thy Power alone) of making me their King; thou wilt utterly overturn them without any Hope of their being raised up again.

Ver. 6. *Blessed be the* LORD, *because he hath heard the Voice of my Supplications.*] And I ought never to forget (that which they neglect) the singular Providence of the LORD over me; whom I therefore bless and praise, because he heard my Prayer when I was in Distress; and desire all Ages may ever praise him.

Ver. 7. *The* LORD *is my Strength and my Shield, my Heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my Heart greatly rejoyceth, and with my Song will I praise him.*] The LORD is to me instead of a Fortress and Shield, when my Enemies assault me: I heartily confided in him, that he would defend me; and behold he sent seasonable Succour to me. (2 *Sam.* XXI. 17.) Which fills my Heart with such exceeding Joy, that (as I cannot express it, so) I am not able to contain my self, but I must compose a Hymn in his Praise, and say,

Ver. 8. *The* LORD *is their Strength, and he is the saving Strength of his anointed.*] It is the LORD that gives Courage and Strength to those that are on my Side: He is the Fortress that preserves in Safety him whom he hath appointed to be the King of his People.

Ver. 9. *Save thy People, and bless thine Inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.*] Whose Good and Happiness I seek; beseeching thee, O LORD, to preserve thy People, and to pour down thy Blessings upon those whom thou hast appropriated to thy self, out of all other Nations: Take care of them, as a Shepherd doth of his Flock; and make them victorious over all their Enemies, both now and in all future Generations.

PSALM XXIX.

A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David *after some extraordinary great* Thunder, Lightning *and* Rain; *whereby (it is probable)* GOD *had so discomfited his Enemies, and put their Forces into such Disorder, that he easily got the Victory over them. Whereupon he exhorts them in this Psalm to submit to that glorious Majesty, from whom that Thunder came; and who can so easily strike a sudden Terrour into the Hearts of his stoutest and most resolved Opposers.* Theodoret *applies it to the Destruction of* Sennacherib's *Army, in* Hezekiah's *Time; for which I see no Foundation: nor for the Title which is now in the* LXX. *(but* Theodoret *could not find in the* Hexaplus,*) which makes the Occasion of it to be,* David's *bringing the Ark to the Place he had prepared for it.*

Ver. 1. *GIVE unto the* LORD, *O ye mighty, give unto the* LORD *Glory and Strength.*]

Strength.] O ye Princes and Rulers of the World, who ſo readily receive the loweſt Proſtrations from your Subjects; give unto the LORD of all, that honour which he juſtly expects from you: Acknowledge his Supreme Power, which you have ſo lately felt: and ſubmit to his Authority.

Ver. 2. *Give unto the* LORD *the Glory due unto his Name: worſhip the* LORD *in the Beauty of Holineſs.*] Do him Honour ſuitable to the Excellence of his Majeſty: And as a Sign you have him in great Veneration, come and caſt down your ſelves before him in the Sanctuary; where he hath fix'd his glorious Reſidence among us.

Ver. 3. *The Voice of the* LORD *is upon the Waters: the* GOD *of Glory thundereth, the* LORD *is upon many Waters.*] Whoſe Voice was it but his, which you heard in the Clouds? (whither the Voice of no earthly Monarch can reach) From thence his glorious Majeſty thunders; and makes not only the Earth, but the great Ocean tremble, at that Token of his Preſence.

Ver. 4. *The Voice of the* LORD *is powerful: the Voice of the* LORD *is full of Majeſty.*] You think there is great Power in your Words: but, as they can be heard but a little Way, ſo they are of little Force, in Compariſon with this mighty Voice; wherein the LORD expreſſes how potent he is; and ſtrikes a Dread and Horrour into all that hear it.

Ver. 5. *The Voice of the* LORD *breaketh the Cedars; yea, the* LORD *breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon.*] It makes the ſtrongeſt Trees of the Foreſt quake; nay, breaks them into Shivers: the Cedars, as hard and tall as they are; even the Cedars of *Libanus*, which are framed for their Durableneſs and goodly Bulk, are thrown down and ſhattered by it.

Ver. 6. *He maketh them alſo to skip like a Calf: Lebanon and Sirion like a young Unicorn.*] It lifts them up into the Air when it hath torn them in Pieces: and makes the Mountains themſelves leap like the young Creatures which live upon them.

Ver. 7. *The Voice of the* LORD *divideth the Flames of Fire:*] Flaſhes of Fire break out together with it; and cutting their Way through the Clouds, are ſcattered, with a wonderful Swiftneſs, into all Quarters.

Ver. 8. *The Voice of the* LORD *ſhaketh the Wilderneſs: the* LORD *ſhaketh the Wilderneſs of Kadeſh.*] The Force of it is felt in the moſt deſart Places, even in that vaſt and horrid Wilderneſs of *Kadeſh*; which, by overthrowing Trees and Rocks, it renders ſtill more horrid.

Ver. 9. *The Voice of the* LORD *maketh the Hinds to calve, and diſcovereth the Foreſts: and in his Temple doth every one ſpeak of his Glory.*] It opens the Wombs of Hinds, which otherwiſe bring forth with the greateſt Difficulty: and it lays bare the Coverts of the wild Beaſts in the Foreſt, whom it frightens into their Dens, while his Temple remains unſhaken by theſe tempeſtuous Blaſts, and all his pious Worſhippers there ſecurely ſing the Praiſes of his glorious Majeſty and Power, ſaying,

Ver. 10. *The* LORD *ſitteth upon the Flood; yea, the* LORD *ſitteth King for ever.*] The LORD is the great King, who governs even the Clouds, and orders the Thunder Showers to do what Execution he pleaſes. When all other Monarchs fail, the LORD ſtill remains the ſame throughout all Generations; and the Thunder doth not more eaſily tear the Trees and Rocks, than he can break in Pieces the proudeſt Princes: who ought therefore to tremble before him, and to dread his Judgments.

Ver. 11. *The* LORD *will give Strength unto his People, the* LORD *will bleſs his People with Peace.*] But as for all thoſe that are ſincerely devoted to his Service, though never ſo weak and feeble; the LORD will be their Support: They may depend upon his Power to defend them in the greateſt Dangers, and againſt the mightieſt Enemies: The LORD will not only preſerve them from Evil; but bleſs and proſper them with all manner of Happineſs.

PSALM XXX.

A Pſalm and Song, at the Dedication of the Houſe of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

The Title of this Pſalm differs from all the foregoing; it being the firſt that is called a Pſalm and Song, *or a* Pſalm-Song: *as others, we ſhall ſee in due Place, are called a* Song and Pſalm, *or a* Song-Pſalm. *The Difference of which it is hard to find out. (See Arg. of Pſal. LXVII.) But here the Words may be otherwiſe conſtrued; for they run currently enough in the* Hebrew; *thus,* A Pſalm, A Song of Dedication of the Houſe, made by David; *who would not eat in his Houſe, till he had firſt in a ſolemn Manner addreſſed himſelf to* GOD, *at his Entrance into it; either after it was newly built,* (2 Sam. *V.* 11.) *or (which agrees beſt with a great Part of the Pſalm) when he returned to it again, after he had been driven from it by the Rebellion of* Abſalom, *who defiled it.* (2 Sam. *XVI.* 21.) *Then he gave* GOD *Thanks for his being reſtored to a peaceable Poſſeſſion of his Palace; and made a Feaſt for his Friends, (as the Manner was, at their Coming to dwell in a new-built Houſe,) with extraordinary Piety and Devotion, acknowledging* GOD's *Goodneſs, who had graciouſly reinſtated him in his Throne. The* Thalmudiſts *generally underſtand by* the Houſe *here mentioned, the Houſe of the Sanctuary; (ſee Mr.* Selden, *L. III. de Synedr. Cap.* 13.) *but I ſee no Ground for it: for* David *did not build* GOD *a Houſe, nor do the Words of the Pſalm (as* Theodoret *obſerves) agree to that Matter.*

Ver. 1. *I will extol thee, O* LORD, *for thou haſt liſted me up, and haſt not made my Foes to rejoyce over me.*] O LORD, to whoſe powerful Providence I aſcribe my late wonderful Deliverance, I will give thee the higheſt Praiſes, and never ceaſe to magnifie thy Name; who haſt drawn me up out of that Depth of Miſery into which I was plung'd, and filled me with that Joy, which my Enemies hoped to have had in my Deſtruction.

Ver. 2. *O* LORD, *my* GOD, *I cried unto thee, and thou haſt healed me.*] O LORD, my gracious GOD, I was in a moſt forlorn and languiſhing Condition; like a ſick Man who cannot help himſelf: But I addreſſed my ſelf, in earneſt Prayer, to thee; and thou haſt reſtored me to my former Eſtate again.

Ver. 3. *O* LORD, *thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave: thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit.*] Which Mercy is the more to be admired, becauſe there ſeemed to be no more hope of my Reſtauration, than there is of the Reſurrection of a dead Man out of his Grave; or, at beſt, of a ſick Man's Recovery, that is juſt at the Point of Death.

Ver. 4. *Sing unto the* LORD, *O ye Saints of his, and give Thanks at the Remembrance of his Holineſs.*] Join with me then, all ye that are ſenſible of the divine Benefits, in this Duty of Praiſe to him, who hath called me from Death unto Life again: Give Thanks together with me, (for my ſingle Praiſes and Thankſgivings are not ſufficient) and gratefully commemorate his Power, and Goodneſs, and Wiſdom, and Truth, which he hath ſhewn in my Reſtitution.

Ver. 5. *For his Anger* endureth but *a Moment; in his Favour is Life: weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy* cometh *in the Morning.*] Wherein you may ſee his Clemency towards his faithful Servants: whom he may correct very ſharply, for a little Time; but is ſoon reconciled, and then extends his Favour to them without any End: and ſends them Deliverance ſo unexpectedly and ſuddenly, as well as ſeaſonably, that where nothing but Lamentations were heard over Night, there nothing but Shouts of Joy are heard in the Morning.

Ver. 6. *And in my Proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved.*] Yet that muſt not make them ſecure, nor confident in any Thing but his Goodneſs alone. For therein I was to blame, that when I was delivered from the Perſecution of *Saul*, and ſettled peaceably in my Kingdom; I fanſied vainly, that now I ſhould never be any more diſturbed.

Ver. 7. LORD, *by thy Favour thou haſt made my Mountain to ſtand ſtrong: thou didſt hide thy Face,* and *I was troubled.*] But I ſoon found that that was more than I could promiſe my ſelf; and that it depended ſolely on thy Favour, O LORD, by whom my Throne was eſtabliſhed in the ſtrong Fortreſs of *Sion*, (2 *Sam.* V. 7, 9.) For thou, being offended with me, didſt withdraw thy gracious Preſence from me; and preſently I was involved in new Troubles and Dangers.

Ver. 8. *I cried unto thee, O* LORD: *and unto the* LORD *I made Supplication.*] And had no way to relieve my ſelf, but by making my Addreſſes to thee, O LORD; and earneſtly beſeeching thee to pardon me, and reſtore me to thy Favour.

Ver. 9. *What Profit* is there *in my Blood, when I go down to the Pit? ſhall the Duſt praiſe thee? ſhall it declare thy Truth?*] For what Service, ſaid I, can I do thee when I am dead? ſhall my Aſhes be able ſo much as to praiſe thy Goodneſs, or declare thy Faithfulneſs to thy Promiſes? Will they not rather ſeem to fail, and loſe their Credit, together with me? Spare me therefore, O LORD, and deliver me from thoſe that ſeek my Life: Let me live, to tell how good and how true thou art.

Ver. 10. *Hear, O* LORD, *and have Mercy upon me:* LORD, *be thou my Helper.*] Do not deny me, O LORD, but take Compaſſion upon my ſad Eſtate. LORD, be thou my Helper; who art able to reſtore me to my former Happineſs, without any other Aſſiſtance; as thou alone, I am ſenſible, not the ſtrongeſt Guards, canſt preſerve me in it.

Ver. 11. *Thou haſt turned for me my Mourning into Dancing: Thou haſt put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with Gladneſs.*] In this Manner I humbly beſought thy Mercy, and obtained a gracious Anſwer: for Joy and Gladneſs is returned again, after a ſhort Time of Sadneſs and Sorrow.

Ver. 12. *To the End that* my *Glory may ſing Praiſe to thee, and not be ſilent: O* LORD *my* GOD, *I will give Thanks unto thee for ever.*] Which engages me to do thee all the Service I am able; and in the moſt magnificent Manner to ſing thy Praiſes without ceaſing. O LORD my moſt gracious GOD, I will be as good as my Reſolution; and ſpend my whole Life in giving Thanks unto thee, for thy faithful Mercy towards me.

PSALM XXXI.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by David, *and delivered to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle; wherein he deſcribes his Confidence in* GOD, *notwithſtanding a grievous Strait wherein he was; When (as I underſtand it) after his Eſcape from* Keilah, Saul, *with three Battalions (as we now ſpeak) purſued him ſo cloſe in the Wilderneſs of* Maon, *that without an extraordinary Providence of* GOD *over him, he had certainly fallen into his Hands. To that ſtrange Deliverance, and not that from* Abſalom, *(to which* Theodoret *refers it,) it is the more probable he hath a Reſpect in this Pſalm, (in the latter End of which it is thankfully commemorated,) becauſe the Haſte, which the Pſalmiſt here ſaith (v.* 22.) *he made in that ſore Diſtreſs, is expreſſed by the very ſame Word, (and uſed no where elſe in any other Part of* David's *Hiſtory,) when the great Fright he was in, and his ſudden ſpeedy Flight from one Place to another, is deſcribed* 1 Sam. *XXIII.* 26.

Ver. 1. *IN thee,* O LORD, *do I put my Truſt, let me never be aſhamed: deliver me in thy Righteouſneſs.*] Thou ſeeſt, O LORD, that in all theſe Perſecutions which I endure, I have no Confidence in any thing, but only thy Power and Goodneſs; which if they ſhould fail me, I ſhould be lamentably aſhamed: prevent that Confuſion, O LORD, and magnifie thy own Mercy and Fidelity, by preſerving me in, and delivering me out of theſe Dangers, which now encompaſs me.

Ver. 2. *Bow down thine Ear to me, deliver me ſpeedily: be thou my ſtrong Rock, for an Houſe of De-*

Defence to save me.] Graciously incline to favour my Request, now that I am so sorely pressed by my Enemies, that they are ready to seize on me: Haste thy Relief, for it is not this Rock or strong Hold wherein I am, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 25.) that can protect me, but only thou, O LORD; to whom I resort as a more sure Defence, than the most impregnable Fortress in the World.

Ver. 3. *For thou* art *my Rock and my Fortress: Therefore for thy Names Sake lead me, and guide me.*] For so I have hitherto found thee in all my Distresses, and therefore I still flee to thee for Safety; beseeching thee to glorify thy self (I have no other Argument whereby to move thee) in leading me out of this Streight; and guiding my Steps so, that I may not fall into the Hands of my Enemies.

Ver. 4. *Pull me out of the Net that they have laid privily for me: For thou* art *my Strength.*] Who have now so circumvented me, and, by the secret Treachery of the *Ziphites*, brought me into such Perplexities, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 19, 20, *&c.*) that I am undone unless thou extricate me: As I hope thou wilt; for I profess again, that I depend on thee alone for Help and Deliverance.

Ver. 5. *Into thine Hand I commit my Spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, O* LORD GOD *of Truth.*] Unto thy Care and Custody I commit my self, and deposite my very Life with thee †: Who hast so often rescued me, when I was like to lose it; and wilt still, I doubt not, shew thy self my most gracious GOD, as well as powerful LORD; who never deceivest those that rely upon thy faithful Word.

[† *Our Saviour used these Words in a more proper and literal Sense than they can be applied to* David.]

Ver. 6. *I have hated them that regard lying Vanities: But I trust in the* LORD.] There is nothing else that I rely upon, for I never inquired of Diviners, Wizzards, Southsayers, or Fortune-tellers; nor consulted with Necromancers, (or any other of those Vanities wherewith the Gentile World is cheated,) which Way I should flee, or how I should provide for my Safety: No, I have hated all such Practices, and those that observe them; confiding intirely in the LORD, and his Directions.

Ver. 7. *I will be glad, and rejoice in thy Mercy: For thou hast considered my Trouble, thou hast known my Soul in Adversities.*] In whose merciful Providence over me I will be glad and rejoice, even when I am in Straits: For it is most delightful to remember how thou hast taken Care of me in my Afflictions; and never neglected, but still owned me, and provided for my Security, in the greatest Distresses.

Ver. 8. *And hast not shut me up into the Hand of the Enemy: thou hast set my Feet in a large Room.*] And very lately didst not suffer me to be shut up in *Keilah*, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 7) whose Inhabitants would have delivered me into the Hands of *Saul*: But admonishedst me by thy Oracles, at which only I enquired, (*ib.* v. 9. *&c.*) to depart from thence, where I was in Danger to be inclosed; and gavest me a larger Compass, to seek the Means of my Preservation.

Ver. 9. *Have Mercy upon me, O* LORD, *for I am in Trouble: Mine Eye is consumed with Grief, yea, my Soul and my Belly.*] Go on, good LORD, to perfect thy Mercy to me; and now that I am fain into a new Difficulty, and closely begirt on every Side by my Enemy, take some Pity upon me, and speedily deliver me: For the continual Anguish and Vexation which these returning Dangers give me, together with the Hunger and Thirst which at present sorely pinch me, have in a Manner quite dispirited me.

Ver. 10. *For my Life is spent with Grief, and my Years with sighing: My Strength faileth because of mine Iniquity, and my Bones are consumed.*] I cannot subsist long, unless thou relievest me: For I am wasted away with Sorrow and Sighing; the Punishments of my Sins are so heavy, and I am so weak, that I cannot support my self under their Burthens.

Ver. 11. *I was a Reproach among all mine Enemies, but especially among my Neighbours, and a Fear to mine Acquaintance: They that did see me without, fled from me.*] My Enemies also mock at my Confidence in thee, now that they have thus distressed me: And my Neighbours, who have been Witnesses of my Integrity in all my Actions, are too prone to join with them in those Reproaches: And, which is still sadder, my familiar Friends are afraid to be seen in my Company, or to send me the least Relief: They dare not entertain me into their Houses; for when they have met me in the High-way, they fled, and would not come nigh me.

Ver. 12. *I am forgotten as a dead Man out of Mind: I am like a broken Vessel.*] They look upon me as a Man utterly lost; and so never think of me, no more than if I were in my Grave; they despair of my Restitution, and despise me as much as an earthen Vessel when it is broken in Pieces; which no Body minds, because it cannot be repaired.

Ver. 13. *For I have heard the Slander of many, Fear was on every Side, while they took Counsel together against me, they devised to take away my Life.*] The Calumnies and Slanders also whereby the greatest Persons defame me, are come to my Ears. They say I am a seditious Fellow; that the Life of the King cannot be in Safety, till I be destroyed: And so they have held Consultation together against me; wherein they have debated nothing else, but how to find a Way to take away my Life.

Ver. 14. *But I trusted in thee, O* LORD: *I said, thou* art *my* GOD.] But how great soever their Cunning and their Power be, and how dejecting soever my Fears; I do not quite despond: But still repose a sure Confidence in thee, O LORD, saying, thou art a Judge of my Innocence; thou art my Defender and Protector, who hath hitherto alway done me right.

Ver. 15. *My Times* are *in thy Hand: Deliver me from the Hand of mine Enemies, and from them that persecute me.*] It is not in their Power to dispose of my Life at their Pleasure; no more than it is in mine to appoint the Time of my Deliverance; which I leave to thy Wisdom, O LORD, to whom it belongs: Only beseeching thee, at present, to rescue me from falling into the Hands of my Enemies; and at last, when thou judgest it most fit, to free me from their Persecution.

Ver. 16. *Make thy Face to shine upon thy Servant:*

vant: Save me for thy Mercies Sake.] Diſperſe theſe black Clouds of Affliction, which have ſo long kept me in ſuch a mournful Condition, that my Enemies fanſie thou haſt abandon'd me: And ſhew the Favour thou beareſt to me, who am faithfully devoted to thy Service; and therefore though I am unworthy of it, yet hope thou wilt magnifie thy own Mercy in delivering me from theſe Dangers, and making me as happy as now I am miſerable.

Ver. 17. *Let me not be aſhamed, O* LORD, *for I have called upon thee: Let the Wicked be aſhamed, and let them be ſilent in the Grave.*] Let not thy humble Supplicant, O LORD, who teſtifies by his daily Prayers that he wholly depends upon thy Favour, be ſhamefully diſappointed in his Expectation of Relief from thee: But let the Wicked be confounded, to ſee all their Contrivances againſt me come to nothing; let them be laid in their Graves, and give me no farther Diſturbance.

Ver. 18. *Let the lying Lips be put to Silence: Which ſpeak grievous Things proudly and contemptuouſly againſt the Righteous.*] Stop the Mouths of thoſe bold Calumniators who inſolently threaten utter Ruin to the Innocent: Whom they charge with the moſt grievous Crimes; and deride all that he can ſay, or do, in his own Defence.

Ver. 19. *O how great is thy Goodneſs which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee*: Which *thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee, before the Sons of Men!*] O what a Comfort is it, when they thus inſult, to think of thy kind Intentions towards thoſe that fear to offend thee, though for the preſent they are moſt miſerably abuſed! How great are the Bleſſings thou haſt treaſured up in Store (as ſhall in Time appear openly before all the World) and prepared for thoſe that religiouſly avoid all unjuſt Ways of preſerving themſelves, and truſt to thee alone!

Ver. 20. *Thou ſhalt hide them in the Secret of thy Preſence from the Pride of Man: Thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a Pavilion from the Strife of Tongues.*] They are forced to hide themſelves ſometimes in Caves and Dens of the Earth, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 14, 19, 23. XXIV. 2, 3, 8.) but there thou art preſent with them; and it is thy gracious Providence that preſerves them from him that furiouſly perſecutes them: Thou doſt keep them as ſafe, as if they were in thy Dwelling-place; from the Miſchiefs which contentious Men, by their falſe Accuſations, ſeek to bring upon them.

Ver. 21. *Bleſſed be the* LORD; *for he hath ſhewed me his marvellous Kindneſs in a ſtrong City.*] Of which I my ſelf (for ever praiſed be the LORD) am a remarkable Inſtance: For he hath magnified his Mercy to me in aſſiſting my Eſcape, when I was ſhut up in a fortified City, that had Gates and Bars, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 7, 13.)

Ver. 22. *For I ſaid in my Haſte, I am cut off from before thine Eyes: Nevertheleſs thou heardeſt the Voice of my Supplications, when I cried unto thee.*] And preſently after that, when I fell into ſuch a Straight, that I had no hope of evading it; but (ſo vehement was my Fear) ſaid in my precipitous Flight, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26.) I am loſt: I ſhall never be able to ſave my ſelf, though I make never ſo much Haſte. Yet even then, upon my humble Supplication to thee, thou didſt inſtantly ſend a moſt ſeaſonable and wonderful Deliverance to me, (*v.* 27.)

Ver. 23. *O love the* LORD *all ye his Saints: For the* LORD *preſerveth the Faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.*] What an Encouragement is this to all truly pious Souls? Let them love the LORD, and ſtedfaſtly cleave unto him: For the LORD taketh Care of their Safety, who continue faithful to him in all their Troubles; and plagueth thoſe who proudly inſult over them, till he hath left none of their Race remaining.

Ver. 24. *Be of good Courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your Heart, all ye that hope in the* LORD.] Be not dejected therefore, much leſs diſheartned in the Courſe of Piety, all ye that place your Hope and Confidence in the LORD: But let that fill you with Courage; and make you firmly reſolved to adhere to him, and never to ſhrink from your Duty under the ſoreſt Afflictions.

PSALM XXXII.

A Pſalm of *David. Maſchil.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by David, *when the Calamities into which he fell by his Son's Rebellion taught him how evil and bitter a Thing it was to offend* GOD, *and how infinitely he was beholden to him, that he was ſo merciful as not to take ſuch a Vengeance on him as his Sins deſerved. There are thoſe who think it was intended for publick Uſe, upon the* great Day of Expiation, *when the whole Nation made a general Confeſſion of their Sins. And called* Maſchil, *either becauſe it contains an excellent* Inſtruction, *(as that Word ſignifies) concerning the Means to obtain true Bleſſedneſs; or becauſe it was ſet to the Tune of a Song, in vulgar Uſe in thoſe Days, which began with the Word* Maſchil. *This is the more probable of the two, becauſe there are XII Pſalms beſides this that have the ſame Title, to all of which the former Reaſon cannot be applied.*

Ver. 1. *Bleſſed* is he whoſe *Tranſgreſſion* is *forgiven*, whoſe *Sin* is *covered.*] Happy is that Man, thrice happy, to whom GOD will be pleaſed, out of his own free Grace and Mercy, (for no Man can merit ſuch a Favour by any Services that we can do him) to remit not only his common Errors and Weakneſſes, but alſo his groſſer Sins, whether committed againſt the Divine Majeſty, or againſt his Neighbours.

Ver. 2. *Bleſſed* is *the Man unto whom the* LORD *imputeth not Iniquity, and in whoſe Spirit there is no Guile.*] It is impoſſible to expreſs the Happineſs of that Man, to whom the LORD will be ſo gracious, as not to exact the Puniſhment due to his former Offences, for which he is moſt heartily afflicted: (For to none elſe this Happineſs belongs) and doth not only ſeem by his ſorrowful Confeſſions to hate and abhor them, but is unfeignedly reſolved to forſake them.

Ver. 3. *When I kept Silence, my Bones waxed old; through my roaring all the Day long.*] He

that

that hath felt the Smart of them as I have done, will be ſenſible what a Pleaſure it is to be eaſed of ſuch a Sting. For when I ſeriouſly reflected upon the grievous Sin I had committed, but not bewailed it as I ought, it filled me with ſuch Anguiſh and Horror, that I loſt all Appetite to my Meat, and pined away till I was not able to go or ſtand; but lay roaring perpetually (like a Lion that hath received a deadly Wound) under the miſerable Torture of my Mind.

Ver. 4. *For Day and Night thy Hand was heavy upon me: my Moiſture is turned into the Drought of Summer. Selah.*] So heavy was the Senſe of thy Diſpleaſure, wherewith I was ſtruck, that I could find no Means to throw it off, either by Buſineſs or Diverſions in the Day: Nor would it ſuffer me to take my Reſt in the Night, but ſtill preſſed down my Spirit, and ſcorch'd me ſo vehemently with its raging Heat, that my Body (which heretofore was fat and freſh) was conſumed and parch'd like the Graſs of the Earth in the midſt of the drieſt Summer.

Ver. 5. *I acknowledged my Sin unto thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid: I ſaid, I will confeſs my Tranſgreſſions unto the* LORD; *and thou forgaveſt the Iniquity of my Sin. Selah.*] But at laſt I bethought my ſelf of that Remedy which I had too long neglected; and humbled my ſelf before thee in a ſorrowful Confeſſion of all my Sins, both great and ſmall: I laid open all thoſe Wounds which were ſo full of Anguiſh, and acknowledged I deſerved to be ſtill far more miſerable: I reſolved I would never hereafter palliate or excuſe my Sins; but ingenuouſly charge my ſelf home with them, and condemn my ſelf before thee for them. And ſtraightway thou (who ſaweſt the Sincerity of my Repentance) waſt pleaſed to grant me a gracious Pardon, and to releaſe me from all my Pain; tho' my Guilt, which was the Cauſe of it, was exceeding great.

Ver. 6. *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a Time when thou mayſt be found: ſurely in the Flouds of great Waters they ſhall not come nigh unto him.*] Which ſhould encourage every one that hath any Senſe of GOD, and of the Bleſſedneſs of being in his Favour, and the Miſery of lying under his Diſpleaſure, to apply himſelf ſpeedily to him, by unfeigned Repentance, as ſoon as ever he hath offended him: For that's the ſureſt Time of finding Mercy with him; and the Way of preventing thoſe great Calamities, which otherwiſe may overtake him, when the LORD ſends a Deluge of Miſeries, as he did in the Days of *Noah*, upon the World of the ungodly.

Ver. 7. *Thou* art *my hiding-place, thou ſhalt preſerve me from Trouble: thou ſhalt compaſs me about with Songs of Deliverance. Selah.*] Then he may ſay, thou LORD art my Refuge, to whom I fly for Safety; and I truſt that thou wilt preſerve me (tho' I have been a grievous Sinner) from thoſe Diſtreſſes which ſurround me; and thereby give abundant Cauſe to me, and all that are about me, to bleſs and praiſe thee for thy merciful Deliverance of me.

Ver. 8. *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the Way which thou ſhalt go: I will guide thee with mine Eye.*] Hearken therefore unto me, whoſoever thou art who haſt any Care of thy Salvation; and I will beſtow ſome good Advice upon thee, and direct thee into the wiſeſt and ſafeſt Courſe of Life: Truſt thy ſelf with me to be thy Guide, and I from my own Experience will give thee faithful Counſel, and take Care thou do not go amiſs.

Ver. 9. *Be ye not as the Horſe,* or *as the Mule,* which *have no Underſtanding: whoſe Mouth muſt be held with Bit and Bridle, leſt they come near unto thee.*] GOD hath endued you with Reaſon, both to tell you what you ought to do, and to check you when you do not as you ought; and hath made you capable alſo of receiving good Admonitions from others: Do not therefore follow your own unbridled Luſts and Appetites, much leſs be refractory and untractable, when GOD would reduce you from the Error of your Ways; as if you were not Men, but head-ſtrong Horſes and Mules, who can by no Means be curbed, nor made to come near thee, that thou mayſt manage them at thy Pleaſure.

Ver. 10. *Many Sorrows* ſhall be *to the wicked: but he that truſteth in the* LORD, *Mercy ſhall compaſs him about.*] Let ſuch ungovernable, obdurate Sinners expect to be handled like thoſe Brutes, for they ſhall receive many and grievous Strokes, which ſhall make their Hearts to ake. But he that entirely commits himſelf to the LORD, to be ruled and diſpoſed of according to his Will, ſhall be not only ſecured by his good Providence, but enriched with Abundance of his Bleſſings.

Ver. 11. *Be glad in the* LORD, *and rejoyce ye righteous: and ſhout for Joy, all* ye that are *upright in Heart.*] And therefore whatſoever your preſent Troubles may be, let your Heart be glad, O ye that are obediently led and governed by him: Rejoice in the Confidence you ought to have of his Favour towards you: Triumph in his Loving-kindneſs, all ye that ſincerely ſtudy to do his Will; and ſhout for Joy, as if you were already victorious over all your Enemies.

PSALM XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

It is not recorded by whom this Pſalm was compoſed, nor upon what Occaſion. But there is little Queſtion it was a pious Meditation of David, *(of whoſe Spirit it ſavours) and, as we may gueſs, upon Occaſion of ſome ſpecial Benefit received from* GOD; *(though not particularly mentioned) which makes him call it, ver. 3. a new Song. (Of which ſee more Pſalm* CXLIX.) *Wherein he deſires all the Faithful to joyn with him in joyful Praiſes of the* LORD; *conſidering his excellent Nature, and his admirable Works, both of Creation and Providence; eſpecially over good Men, who piouſly truſt in him, and expect all good from him; and therefore ought to think themſelves bleſſed that they have relation to him.*

Ver. 1. REjoice *in the* LORD, *O ye righteous,* for *Praiſe is comely for the upright.*] Bleſs the LORD with joyful Hearts, triumph in his Praiſe, all ye that are juſt and good:

For nothing is more becoming them that ſincerely do the Will of GOD, than to praiſe him, from whom they have receiv'd, and hope for ſo many Benefits; and nothing is more deſired than to have your Hearts perpetually filled with delightful Thoughts of him.

Ver. 2. *Praiſe the* LORD *with Harp: ſing unto him with the Pſaltery, and an Inſtrument of ten Strings.*] Extol therefore his glorious Perfections in Pſalms and Hymns, compoſed in Praiſe of him: and let all the Inſtruments of Muſick accompany the Voices, to expreſs and excite your Joy in him.

Ver. 3. *Sing unto him a new Song, play skilfully with a loud Noiſe.*] Let not the antient Songs of Praiſe ſuffice you, but indite a new Hymn, to teſtify your ſingular Love and Gratitude to him: Employ your beſt Skill to make the ſweeteſt Muſick; and ſing as chearfully as you art wont to do at your moſt ſolemn Feaſts.

Ver. 4. *For the Word of the* LORD *is right: and all his Works* are done *in Truth.*] For the LORD hath graciouſly revealed his Will unto you, and ſhewn you the right Way, in which if you walk, you cannot miſs of being happy: and whatſoever he *doth*, hath the ſame Scope with what he *ſaith*; for in all that befals you, he faithfully deſigns your Good.

Ver. 5. *He loveth Righteouſneſs and Judgment: the Earth is full of the Goodneſs of the* LORD.] Let this therefore be Part of your Song, the LORD governs the World with perfect Juſtice and Equity; theſe he loves, and in theſe he delights: His Goodneſs and Mercy alſo are ſo conſpicuous, that we can look no where but we ſee innumerable Proofs of his Bounty towards us; which ſpreads it ſelf over the Face of the whole Earth.

Ver. 6. *By the Word of the* LORD *were the Heavens made: and all the Hoſt of them by the Breath of his Mouth.*] And who can doubt of the Greatneſs of his Power, when he beholds the ſpacious Heavens; with the Sun, Moon, and all the Stars, which are placed there like an Army in excellent Order; and conſiders that all theſe he made with the ſame Eaſe that we ſpeak a Word, only by commanding them to be.

Ver. 7. *He gathereth the Waters of the Sea together as an Heap: he layeth up the Depth in Store-houſes.*] Nay, the Earth it ſelf declares how mighty he is: for when it lay covered with the Waters, being far heavier than they, he commanded it to appear, (*Gen.* 1. 9, 10.) and cutting a deep Channel for them, he laid them up there as in Cellars; where they ſwell, and riſe up in round Heaps, higher than the Shoar, but cannot overflow the Earth.

Ver. 8. *Let all the Earth fear the* LORD: *let all the Inhabitants of the World ſtand in Awe of him.*] Let all Mankind therefore, in whatſoever Part of the World they dwell, dread this Almighty LORD: Let them not dare to diſobey him, who thus tamed even the raging Sea.

Ver. 9. *For he ſpake, and it was* done: *he commanded, and it ſtood faſt.*] For as then he did but ſignify his Pleaſure, and the thing was done, and remained fixed and firm according to his Appointment: ſo whatſoever he will have now to be done, (whether for a Bleſſing on thoſe that ſubmit to him, or a Puniſhment of the Diſobedient) it ſhall certainly come to paſs; and none can reſiſt or alter his Orders.

Ver. 10. *The* LORD *bringeth the Counſel of the Heathen to nought: he maketh the Devices of the People of none Effect.*] Let Men lay their Deſigns never ſo deep, let whole Nations combine together, and in their graveſt Aſſemblies conſult how to compaſs their Ends; the LORD (ſuch is his Wiſdom, as well as his Power) eaſily diſappoints them all: and makes the moſt likely Contrivances, which oppoſe his Will, to be in vain and without Succeſs.

Ver. 11. *The Counſel of the* LORD *ſtandeth for ever, the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations.*] Whereas that which he reſolves none can defeat; but ſhall certainly obtain its Effect. One Generation paſſes away, and another comes in its Stead; but his Purpoſes are ſtill immoveably the ſame, and can no more in future Ages than now be overthrown.

Ver. 12. *Bleſſed* is *the Nation whoſe* GOD *is the* LORD: and *the People* whom *he hath choſen for his own Inheritance.*] Moſt happy then is that Nation which worſhips this LORD, the Creator of Heaven and Earth: unſpeakably happy are they who live under the Care of ſo juſt, ſo good, ſo powerful and wiſe a Being, and are ſo highly in his Favour, that he hath choſen them (though all Mankind be his) to be a peculiar People to himſelf; among whom in a ſpecial Manner he will reſide, and hath ingaged himſelf by a gracious Covenant to do them good.

Ver. 13. *The* LORD *looked from Heaven: he beholdeth all the Sons of Men.*] How careful ought they to be to pleaſe him, and approve their very Hearts unto him! For though he be in Heaven, as the Place of his moſt ſpecial and moſt glorious Preſence; yet there is not a Man upon Earth but he ſees and obſerves him.

Ver. 14. *From the Place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth.*] They are all expoſed to his View; and from thence he takes a ſtrict and exact Account, not only of all their open Actions, but of their moſt ſecret Deſigns and Contrivances.

Ver. 15. *He faſhioneth their Hearts alike: he conſidereth all their Works.*] For they are every one of them, without Exception, his Creatures: and as he is equally the former of them all, ſo he formed their Souls as well as their Bodies; and therefore muſt needs ſee into their very Hearts, and be perfectly acquainted with every one of their Thoughts.

Ver. 16. *There is no King ſaved by the Multitude of an Hoſt: a mighty Man is not delivered by much Strength.*] And to him a King is no more than another Man; but if he ſees that he regards not his Majeſty, nor depends upon him, he will make him find, that it is not in the Power of the greateſt Army he can raiſe, to ſecure and defend him: nor ſhall the mightieſt and moſt valiant Man in that Army be able to deliver ſo much as himſelf, though he hath a Giant-like Strength.

Ver. 17. *An Horſe* is *a vain Thing for Safety: neither ſhall he deliver* any *by his great Strength.*] Though he ſhould be mounted upon the ſtouteſt Horſe, (which is a moſt warlike Creature,) he will but deceive himſelf, if he rely either upon his

his Courage, or his Strength, or his Agility, or his Swiftneſs, for Preſervation.

Ver. 18. *Behold, the Eye of the* LORD *is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his Mercy.*] It is the LORD only from whom comes Salvation; and he hath Regard to none but thoſe that fear to offend his Majeſty, and placing their Confidence and Hope in his Love, more than all humane Force, look up to him for Safety. Over ſuch he will watch with a very careful Providence.

Ver. 19. *To deliver their Soul from Death, and to keep them alive in Famine.*] To reſcue them when they are in Danger by the Sword or the Plague; and to ſupply their Neceſſities in Time of Scarcity and Dearth.

Ver. 20. *Our Soul waiteth for the* LORD: *he is our Help and our Shield.*] What ſhall we do therefore in all Straits, but deſire him to take Care of us? For this is our peculiar Privilege, that we may confidently expect and wait for his ſeaſonable Relief, who is our only Helper and Defender.

Ver. 21. *For our Heart ſhall rejoice in him: becauſe we have truſted in his holy Name.*] For we may be ſure he will not fail our Expectations, but at the laſt fill our Hearts with Joy, as a Reward of the pious Truſt we have repoſed in him; whoſe unſpotted Purity and Faithfulneſs ſhall be ever famed.

Ver. 22. *Let thy Mercy, O* LORD, *be upon us, according as we hope in thee.*] O LORD, thou ſeeſt we depend upon thee alone, and have placed all our Hope, all our Comfort and Contentment in thy Care and good Providence over us: Let us proſper accordingly; deal with us according as we truſt in thee, and not in any Strength, Wiſdom, or Contrivance of our own.

PSALM XXXIV.

A Pſalm of *David*, when he changed his Behaviour before *Abimelech*; who drove him away, and he departed.

ARGUMENT.

The Title tells us this Pſalm was penned by David, *after the Eſcape he made from* Achiſh *King of* Gath, *(in which Country all their Kings were called by the common Name of* Abimelech, *i. e.* My Father the King; *as in* Egypt *anciently they were all called* Pharaoh, *and afterward* Ptolomy,) *who he was afraid would ſeize on him, when he heard it commonly reported, that he was the Perſon that killed* Goliah, *and pretended to the Sovereignty over all thoſe Countries:* (1 Sam. *XXI.* 11.) *And therefore he put on the Behaviour of a Man beſide himſelf: hoping that when* Achiſh *ſaw this, he would deſpiſe him; and looking upon him as an uſeleſs Man, that could do neither good nor harm, think fit to thruſt him out of his Court, where he had been entertained, and ſend him packing from thence. And accordingly it ſucceeded.* (1 Sam. *XXI.* 14, 15.) *But though he was preſerved by this Artifice, the Deliverance notwithſtanding is pioufly aſcribed unto* God's *great Mercy, who proſpered the Device. To whom therefore he would have all pious Men commit themſelves, and depend upon his Favour in well-doing: which he declares is the ſure Courſe to be happy. The Pſalm is curiouſly compoſed, according to the Number and Order of the Letters of the* Hebrew Alphabet, *in the Beginning of every Verſe; which ſhews it was contrived, when he reflected upon his Eſcape, in ſome Place of Safety.*

Ver. 1. *I Will bleſs the* LORD *at all times: his Praiſe ſhall continually be in my Mouth.*] I will never forget how gracious the LORD hath been to me in this remarkable Deliverance; but, whatſoever my Condition be, will ſtill have my Mind and my Mouth perpetually filled with his Praiſe.

Ver. 2. *My Soul ſhall make her Boaſt in the* LORD: *the humble ſhall hear thereof, and be glad.*] This ſhall be my Glory, in this I will think my ſelf happy, that the LORD is with me, whereſoever I am, to guide and defend me: and I will let all thoſe that humbly depend on him know what he hath done for me; that they may likewiſe joyfully hope for his Mercy.

Ver. 3. *O magnifie the* LORD *with me, and let us exalt his Name together.*] Oh that they would all join with me in declaring the Greatneſs of his Goodneſs, in this miraculous Providence over me! Let them with the ſame devout Affection extol him in all his glorious Attributes; who hath given *me* ſuch a Deliverance, and *them* ſuch Hope in the greateſt Danger.

Ver. 4. *I ſought the* LORD, *and he heard me, and delivered me from all my Fears.*] I was ſore afraid (1 *Sam.* XXI. 12.) when I found they had diſcovered me in the Court of *Achiſh* who I was; and many a ſad Thought and dreadful Apprehenſion began then to trouble my Mind: But committing my ſelf to thee by hearty Prayer, and deſiring thee to be my Guide and my Protector; thou waſt pleaſed preſently to rid me of them, by inclining his Heart to look upon me as I appeared, and to make no ſtricter Inquiry after me.

Ver. 5. *They looked unto him, and were lightned: and their Faces were not aſhamed.*] From which all pious Men ſhould take Courage in all their Straits, and when their Hearts are ready to ſink, look up unto GOD: who will revive and comfort them, and never ſuffer them to be aſhamed of the Hope they repoſe in him.

Ver. 6. *This poor Man cried, and the* LORD *heard him; and ſaved him out of all his Troubles.*] Let them fix their Eyes on me, and excite one another to a chearful Dependance on him, ſaying, Behold *this* Man: he was in a miſerably poor Condition, deſtitute of all humane Help; but commending himſelf to the LORD by earneſt Prayer, the LORD took Care of him, and delivered him out of all his Diſtreſſes.

Ver. 7. *The Angel of the* LORD *encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.*] Why ſhould we then deſpair of his Mercy, who ſends an inviſible Hoſt (as appeared to *Eliſha*) to guard thoſe who fear nothing ſo much as to offend his Majeſty; and to preſerve them as ſecurely as if they were ſurrounded with an invincible Army, from all the Aſſaults of their Enemies?

Ver.

Ver. 8. *O taste and see that the* LORD *is good: Blessed is the Man that trusteth him.*] Oh that Men would not be so negligent, but seriously consider this; and make a Trial, by stedfast Fidelity to GOD in all their Troubles, how gracious and kind he is! They shall soon find, that there is no Man so happy, as he that piously confides in him.

Ver. 9. *O fear the* LORD, *ye his Saints: For* there is *no Want to them that fear him.*] Continue therefore, O ye devout Worshippers of the LORD, (whatsoever other Men do,) to fear nothing, but least you should be false to him. Never betake your selves to any sinful Ways, to provide for your Safety, or to supply any of your Necessities: But religiously observe his Command; and you shall never be reduced to such Straits, as to be utterly destitute of what is needful for your Preservation.

Ver. 10. *The young Lions do lack, and suffer Hunger: But they that seek the* LORD *shall not want any good* Thing.] The young Lions, (an Emblem of those who seek to inrich themselves by Rapine, or by injurious Practices,) who are most ravenous in their Appetites, as well as swift to pursue, and bold to seize, and strong to tear in Pieces their Prey, are many Times disappointed, and cannot meet with Satisfaction to their hungry Desires; but they that seek their Food from the LORD in pious and honest Ways, shall certainly be blessed with every Thing that is good for them.

Ver. 11. *Come, ye Children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the Fear of the* LORD.] Come hither then, all ye that are disposed to learn, and hearken to the Instruction, which, out of a most tender Affection to your Welfare, I shall give you concerning the Fear of the LORD.

Ver. 12. *What Man* is he that *desireth Life,* and *liveth* many *Days, that he may see Good?*] Who is there among you that desires to live happily? That would fain prolong his Life to a great Number of Years, and have them all prosperous and pleasant?

Ver. 13. *Keep thy Tongue from Evil, and thy Lips from speaking Guile.*] Let him be very careful, in the first Place, to bridle his Tongue; and never imploy it to speak Evil of others, or to deceive them with fair Words and false Promises.

Ver. 14. *Depart from Evil, and do Good: Seek Peace, and pursue it.*] Let him in all his Actions also eschew what GOD hath prohibited, and do what he hath commanded: and, more particularly, avoiding all Hatreds and Enmities, Strife and Contention, study to maintain Love and Friendship with all his Neighbours, and to make Peace among them when they quarrel; and though they be averse to it, not to cease his Importunities, till, if it be possible, he hath reconciled them.

Ver. 15. *The Eyes of the* LORD are *upon the Righteous, and his Ears* are open *unto their Cry.*] Such Men will feel great Contentment in their own Hearts, and be exceedingly beloved by others: And (which is the greatest Happiness of all) the LORD will have a special Care of them; and, when they are in any Distress, most readily hear their Cry, and help them.

Ver. 16. *The Face of the* LORD is *against them that do Evil, to cut off the Remembrance of them from the Earth.*] But as for all those that take the contrary Course, (besides that they are ill at Ease in themselves, and hated by their Neighbours,) the LORD is their Enemy; and in his heavy Displeasure will utterly destroy both them and theirs.

Ver. 17. The Righteous *cry, and the* LORD *heareth, and delivereth them out of all their Troubles.*] Experience hath taught us this, (and therefore let them not be disheartned if they fall into any Trouble, but still expect good Days,) that the LORD graciously answers the Prayers of those who adhere unto him in the Ways of Piety and Peaceableness, and sends them seasonable Relief and Deliverance.

Ver. 18. *The* LORD is *nigh unto them that are of a broken Heart: And saveth such as be of a contrite Spirit.*] Though he may seem to absent himself, by suffering them to be sorely bruised and crushed under their Burthens: Yet he is really present to them, to support and comfort their drooping Spirits; and at last to ease them of their Burthens after they have humbly and patiently submitted to them.

Ver. 19. *Many* are *the Afflictions of the Righteous: But the* LORD *delivereth him out of them all.*] Many of these Afflictions there may be: (For such Prosperity they must not promise themselves, as will exempt them from Troubles, for a Trial of their Fidelity:) But in this they ought to think themselves happy, that they know the LORD will put an End to them, when he hath sufficiently proved them.

Ver. 20. *He keepeth all his Bones: not one of them is broken.*] And while they lie under them, he sustains, upholds, and defends them: So that they receive not the least Hurt by any of those Sufferings, which otherwise would crush them in Pieces.

Ver. 21. *Evil shall slay the Wicked: And they that hate the Righteous shall be desolate.*] Whereas the Wicked, who for the present flourish, shall at last be seized by some Calamity or other; which shall stick to them, till it hath destroyed them: They that spitefully persecute the Righteous, bring such a Guilt upon themselves, that they shall not escape without their justly deserved Punishment.

Ver. 22. *The* LORD *redeemeth the Soul of his Servants: And none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.*] And by that very Means the LORD oft-times rescues his faithful Servants from those Mischiefs which their Enemies intended to them; and, you may be sure, will not suffer any of them, since they rely intirely upon him, to perish like those ungodly Wretches.

PSALM XXXV.

A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, we are sufficiently informed by the Matter of it, was penned by David, *when he was fiercely persecuted by* Saul. *Whose Forces, which were unjustly raised against him, he beseeches the* LORD *to dissipate; and especially to stop the Mouth of his false Accusers;*

(*such*

such as Doeg, *and the* Ziphites,) *of whom he most heavily complains, in the middle of the Psalm, vowing to* God *that he would be ever mindful of the Benefit, and never cease to give him Thanks and Praise for his Loving-kindness, if he would be pleased to confound them, and deliver him.*

There may seem to be here, as in other Psalms, such horrid Imprecations against his Enemies, as do not become the Mouth of a good Man. But they must be considered as an Appeal to God *in a particular Case; for Justice against those whom no Court on Earth could or would punish. Which made it fit, he thought, to desire the Divine Majesty to execute the Judgment, he had enacted in his Law, against obstinate and incurable Offenders, who else would escape the Hand of Justice; whereby also others would be hardened in their Wickedness.*

Besides, the Words may be interpreted not as a Prayer, but as a Prediction; and rendred, not Let them be, *but* They shall be, *&c.*

Ver. 1. *Plead my Cause, O* Lord, *with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.*] Take my Part, O Lord, and maintain my Cause against those that contend with me, and have raised a War against me: For I am not able to defend my self, and have none else to appear for me.

Ver. 2. *Take hold of Shield and Buckler, and stand up for mine Help.*] Be thou my Protector, and preserve me under the Shield of thy Almighty Providence: oppose thy self unto them, and keep off all the Assaults of my Enemies.

Ver. 3. *Draw out also the Spear, and stop* the Way *against them that persecute me: say unto my Soul, I am thy Salvation.*] Strike through *them*, as well as defend *me*; let them run upon the Spear and the Sword, if they continue to pursue me: and confirm my Soul in this Belief, that thou wilt at last deliver me from this Persecution.

Ver. 4. *Let them be confounded and put to Shame that seek after my Soul: let them be turned back and brought to Confusion that devise my Hurt.*] Disappoint them [*or*, they shall be disappointed] of their Hope, which they have to destroy me; and make them blush to see all their warlike Preparation against me come to nothing: let them all be put to Flight, and make a confused Retreat with Shame and Dishonour, who design my Ruin.

Ver. 5. *Let them be as Chaff before the Wind: and let the Angel of the* Lord *chase them.*] Let them be dispersed [*or*, they shall be dispersed, *and so of the rest*,] as the Chaff, when it is blown about by a mighty Wind: and let the invisible Powers, which thou usest as Ministers of thy Displeasure, (especially when thy Ministers on Earth do not their Duty) drive them forward, and thrust them on in that Disorder.

Ver. 6. *Let their Way be dark and slippery, and let the Angel of the* Lord *persecute them.*] Let them not know where they are in their Flight; but wander, as Men in the Dark, up and down in slippery and dangerous Ways: and there let the Ministers of thy Vengeance still pursue them, and press them on with restless Fears, till they tumble headlong into Destruction.

Ver. 7. *For without Cause have they hid for me their Net in a Pit, which without Cause they have digged for my Soul.*] For though I have done them no Wrong, nor given them any Provocation; they hunt and pursue me, as if I were some wild Beast; and by Treachery, as well as open Force, endeavour to take away my Life.

Ver. 8. *Let Destruction come upon him at unawares, and let his Net that he hath hid, catch himself: into that very Destruction let him fall.*] Let him, whose Hatred hath armed so many against me, (and, when I suspected no Danger, sought my Ruin, 1 *Sam.* XVIII. 10, 11, 21. XIX. 10.) meet with unexpected Destruction: let him be caught in his own Wiles, and, according to the Rules of thy righteous Judgment, suffer that himself, which he thought to do to me.

Ver. 9. *And my Soul shall be joyful in the* Lord: *it shall rejoyce in his Salvation.*] Then shall my Soul conceive the highest Joy in the Love the Lord bears to me, and in his Care over me: To him will I give Thanks, as the Author of my Deliverance, and rejoyce in what he hath done for me.

Ver. 10. *All my Bones shall say,* Lord, *who is like unto thee, which deliverest the Poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the Poor and the Needy, from him that spoileth him?*] The Joy shall spread all over me, and from the inmost Sense of my Heart, with all the Power and Strength I have, both of Body and Soul, I will burst forth in thy Praise, and say, Lord, who is comparable to thee in Mercy, and Wisdom, and Power? who rescuest the poor helpless Man, in wonderful Ways, from him whom he cannot resist; the Man who is miserably in Want, and hath none to relieve him, from him who by Violence and Oppression hath undone him.

Ver. 11. *False Witnesses did rise up; they laid to my Charge things that I knew not.*] For which they have no Pretence at all, but what is founded on Calumnies and Lies, forged by Men of no Conscience; who have accused me of the highest Crime, and laid to my Charge such Things as never entred into my Mind, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 9.

Ver. 12. *They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my Soul.*] And (which adds to the Sharpness of my Persecution) they are Men whom I have obliged; who are so detestably ungrateful, as, for all the good I did them when I was in Power, to make me no other Requital, but to endeavour to deprive me of my Life.

Ver. 13. *But as for me, when they were sick, my Clothing was Sackcloth: I humbled my Soul with fasting, and my Prayer returned into my own Bosom.*] O how unlike is this to the Kindness that I shewed to them in their Troubles! When they were sick, for Instance, I sympathized most heartily with them; and testified my unfeigned Grief and Sorrow for them, by putting on Sackcloth; in which I humbled my self before God, with Prayer and Fasting, for their Recovery: Which I often repeated; and in such an affectionate Manner poured out my Soul to God on their Behalf, in my most secret Retirements, that I wish my self no better, than I desired God to do for them.

Ver. 14. *I behaved my self as though he had been my Friend, or Brother: I bowed down heavily,*

as one that mourneth for his Mother.] I walked mournfully; and went to viſit them with the ſame Diligence, as if I had been in Danger to loſe a Friend or Brother: I could not have look'd more dejectedly, if I had bewailed the Death of the deareſt Mother.

Ver. 15. *But in mine Adverſity they rejoiced, and gathered themſelves together: Yea, the Abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceaſed not.*] But theſe very Men (ſuch was their Inhumanity) could not diſſemble the Joy they conceived, when the News was brought of any Evil that befel me; but ran to tell one another, and aſſembled themſelves together, that they might publickly teſtify how glad they were to hear it. The very Scum of the People, who were ſo vile, that I did not ſo much as know there were ſuch Men in the World, met together by their Example, to revile me; and there was no End of their Reproaches.

Ver. 16. *With hypocritical Mockers in Feaſts: They gnaſhed upon me with their Teeth.*] They joined themſelves to the profane Flatterers and Trencher-buffoons; who maintaining themſelves by ſaying any Thing which they think will pleaſe their Lords and Maſters, made me the Subject of their abuſive Jeſts, ridiculous Sayings and Scoffs, in their Table-talk; which they accompanied with ſuch Rage, as if they could have eaten me up.

Ver. 17. LORD, *how long wilt thou look on? Reſcue my Soul from their Deſtructions, my Darling from the Lions.*] LORD! thou ſeeſt all this, I know very well, but how long wilt thou bear with it, and be a Spectator only? Be pleaſed at length to vindicate my Innocence, and deliver me (who am deſolate, and have none to relieve me, but thee alone) from thoſe that have already deſpoiled me of my Goods and good Name; and now ſeek, like ſo many rapacious Lions, to devour me, and take away my Life.

Ver. 18. *I will give thee Thanks in the great Congregation: I will praiſe thee among much People.*] I will ever preſerve a grateful Remembrance of it, if thou wilt vouchſafe this Mercy to me; it ſhall be acknowledged with the moſt hearty Thanks before all thy People, as ſoon as thou ſhalt reſtore me to thy Tabernacle; in the moſt frequent Aſſemblies, when the whole Nation meets at their ſolemn Feaſts, I will celebrate thy Power and Goodneſs with my Praiſes.

Ver. 19. *Let not them that are mine Enemies wrongfully rejoice over me:* Neither *let them wink with the Eye, that hate me without a Cauſe.*] Let not thoſe therefore that unjuſtly perſecute me, have the Pleaſure of getting any Advantage of me: Let them no longer make Signs one to another with their Eyes and their Heads, as if they had done their Buſineſs, and ſhould ſatisfy their cauſeleſs Hatred of me.

Ver. 20. *For they ſpeak not Peace, but they deviſe deceitful Matters againſt* them that are *quiet in the Land.*] For they are Men of a turbulent Spirit, that give not their Sovereign peaceable Counſels; but deviſe falſe Stories, to incenſe him againſt thoſe that would gladly ſerve God quietly under his Government, without doing the leaſt Harm to any Body.

Ver. 21. *Yea, they opened their Mouth wide againſt me,* and *ſaid, Aha, aha, our Eye hath ſeen it.*] Nor are they content to do this ſecretly; but now they bawl againſt me with open Mouth, and boldly accuſe me as a Traitor, rejoicing at any Colour they can meet withal for their Calumnies; and ſaying, ſo, ſo, we have found him out; his treaſonable Practices are diſcovered; we our ſelves are Eye-witneſſes of it.

Ver. 22. This *thou haſt ſeen, O* LORD, *keep not Silence: O* LORD, *be not far from me.*] But thou knoweſt me better than they, O LORD; to whom I appeal as a Witneſs of the Wrong they do me; beſeeching thee to declare my Innocence, by affording me thy Help, and delivering me from their Hands, now that they hope to ſeize on me.

Ver. 23. *Stir up thy ſelf, and awake to my Judgment,* even *unto my Cauſe, my* GOD *and my* LORD.] Thou haſt ſeemed hitherto to neglect me, though I have ſo often made my Appeal to thee: But I beſeech thee at length, O my GOD and my LORD, who art the only Judge that can give me Relief, the only Sovereign that can protect an injured Subject, to take Cognizance of my Cauſe; and paſs Sentence on me according to my Doings.

Ver. 24. *Judge me, O* LORD *my* GOD, *according to thy Righteouſneſs, and let them not rejoice over me.*] I deſire only that thou wilt do me Right; and not that thou ſhouldſt, in Favour of me, forbear to condemn and puniſh me, if I be guilty of what they accuſe me. Deal with me according to thy unſpotted Juſtice, O LORD, (whom the Fear of none can overawe) my GOD, (who art a Judge whom none can corrupt) and then I know they ſhall never have the better of me.

Ver. 25. *Let them not ſay in their Hearts, Ah, ſo would we have it: Let them not ſay, We have ſwallowed him up.*] Prevent ſo great a Miſchief, O LORD, leſt they ſhould applaud themſelves in their Wickedneſs. Let them have no Occaſion to think within themſelves they ſhall prevail; ſaying to their Souls, ſo, now all goes well; chear up, we ſhall have our Deſires: Much leſs let them prevail ſo far, that they ſhould triumph in my Ruin, and ſay, we have obtained our End, we have utterly deſtroyed him.

Ver. 26. *Let them be aſhamed, and brought to Confuſion together, that rejoice at mine Hurt: Let them be cloathed with Shame and Diſhonour, that magnify* themſelves *againſt me.*] Let them all be ſhamefully diſappointed; and as they have combined together inſolently to deride and mock me; ſo let them who rejoice at my preſent forlorn Condition, look upon one another with Amazement and Confuſion. Let them not only be put to the Bluſh, but perfectly confounded, and never be able to lift up their Heads again, who proudly traduce me, and ſeek to raiſe themſelves upon my Ruin.

Ver. 27. *Let them ſhout for Joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous Cauſe: Yea, let them ſay continually, Let the* LORD *be magnified, which hath Pleaſure in the Proſperity of his Servant.*] And thereby fill all their Hearts with Joy, and their Mouths with the Voice of Triumph, who believing my Innocence, have wiſhed well to me: And let them ſee me ſo victorious, that this may be their perpetual Song, the LORD be ex-

extolled with the higheſt Praiſes, who favoured his Servant *David* ſo much, that he delivered him out of all his Troubles, and ſettled him in Peace and Proſperity.

Ver. 28. *And my Tongue ſhall ſpeak of thy Righteouſneſs, and of thy Praiſe all the Day long.*] As for *my* Tongue, that ſure ſhall never reſt; but be declaring thy Juſtice, and Goodneſs, and Fidelity to me: On which I ſhall ever think, and be giving thee the Praiſe which is due unto them perpetually.

PSALM XXXVI.

To the chief Muſician. A Pſalm of David, the Servant of the LORD.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, compoſed by David, *and delivered by him to the chief Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle, ſeems to have been penned, as the former, and many others were, during the Perſecution he ſuffered from* Saul. *It is hard to ſay, to what Part of that Time it peculiarly belongs. The moſt probable Opinion is, that it hath Reſpect to the Beginning of it: When* Saul *had a Jealouſy of him, and a Hatred to him; but hid it ſecretly in his Heart, and counterfeited Friendſhip to him, and Deſire of his Alliance; (as you read* 1 Sam. *XVIII.) and yet could not carry the Matter ſo cunningly, and ſo wholly ſuppreſs and conceal his Intentions to deſtroy him, but that they broke out in ſome Fits; (as you find there,* v. 11. *and in the next Chapter,* v. 10.*) and by the very Preferment he gave him, made it plainly appear he deſign'd his Ruin. This Treachery* David *here deſcribes; (without naming* Saul, *to whom he preſerved a due Reverence;) and oppoſes thereunto the Fidelity and Goodneſs of* GOD, *who rules the whole World, and takes Care of Beaſts as well as Men; and therefore would not, he hoped, deſert him, nor any elſe that depend on him, and are his faithful Servants; as he, in a ſpecial Manner, profeſſed himſelf, and was obliged to be.*

Ver. 1. *THE Tranſgreſſion of the Wicked ſaith within my Heart, that there is no Fear of* GOD *before his Eyes.*] The Wicked may uſe many Arts to diſguiſe and cloak his evil Intentions; but his Actions, directly contrary to all the Laws of Humanity, as well as the Law of GOD, diſcover what he is, and make me reſolve not to truſt him; becauſe, without all doubt, he hath no Regard to GOD, nor will be reſtrain'd by the Fear of him from doing me ſtill more Miſchief.

Ver. 2. *For he flattereth himſelf in his own Eyes, until his Iniquity be found to be hateful.*] Though he flatter and ſooth up himſelf in his own Conceit, imagining he carries Things ſo cunningly and ſmoothly, that none can accuſe him; yet at length his Iniquity ſhall be found out, and make him odious to all the World.

Ver. 3. *The Words of his Mouth* are *Iniquity and Deceit: he hath left off to be wiſe, and to do good.*] When he pretends great Kindneſs to me, and profeſſes I am dear to him, his Meaning is to do me Miſchief, and to cheat and enſnare me into Danger. He was once a better Man, and better affected towards me; but now his Paſſions have ſo blinded his Judgment, and perverted his Will, that he knows not what belongs to Juſtice and Equity, much leſs to Goodneſs and Charity.

Ver. 4. *He deviſeth Miſchief upon his Bed, he ſetteth himſelf in a Way* that is *not good: he abhorreth not Evil.*] For whatſoever he may ſay in publick of his Affection to me, when he is retired, he is contriving how to ruin me. He muſes of nothing elſe when he lies down to ſleep, and when he awakes: And is not tranſported merely by a ſudden fit of Jealouſy and Anger againſt me; but hath ſet himſelf (with an obſtinate Reſolution to perſiſt in it) in a Courſe ſo void of all Piety, Juſtice, or Charity, that there is no Wickedneſs, though never ſo abominable, at which he ſticks, to compaſs his Deſign to deſtroy me.

Ver. 5. *Thy Mercy (O* LORD,) is *in the Heavens*; and *thy Faithfulneſs* reacheth *unto the Clouds.*] My Comfort is, that his Hatred and Falſhood cannot be ſo great; but thy Goodneſs and Loving-kindneſs, O LORD, and thy Faithfulneſs to thy Word, are infinitely greater: On theſe I rely, which I know will not deceive me; being no leſs conſpicuous and conſtant (as well as unmeaſurable) than the Heavens.

Ver. 6. *Thy Righteouſneſs* is *like the great Mountains; thy Judgments* are *a great Deep: O* LORD, *thou preſerveſt Man and Beaſt.*] Thy Juſtice alſo, in the Adminiſtrations of all Affairs, appears as viſibly, and is as unmoveable, as the higheſt Mountains; which the greateſt Power on Earth cannot ſhake, nor make to bend to their Inclinations. The deepeſt Plots they can lay are ſhallow, and eaſily diſappointed by thee; whoſe Orders and Decrees ſhall be executed and brought to paſs, by Ways and Means that we cannot fathom: And therefore I will truſt in thee, O LORD; whoſe careful Providence extends not only to Men, but to Beaſts alſo, which have no Senſe of thee.

Ver. 7. *How excellent* is *thy Loving-kindneſs, O* GOD! *therefore the Children of Men put their truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings.*] For if thou haſt ſuch Care of their well-being, O GOD; thy Loving-kindneſs, ſure, and tender Mercy, is incomparably greater to thoſe that know thee, and depend upon thee. It is impoſſible to expreſs the Value of it; and to know how rich, how ſafe, and ſecure they are, who in all Troubles and Dangers can confide in thee for thy powerful Protection.

Ver. 8. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of thy Houſe: And thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleaſures.*] They ſhall not only be well contented in that Condition wherein they are; but have abundant Satisfaction in thy Love to them; and at length bring thee the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, for thy merciful Preſervation of them, and feaſt with thee in thy Houſe; where thou ſhalt pour into them the ſweeteſt Joys, and give them an Earneſt of the greateſt Plenty of all Divine Bleſſings, that ſhall continually flow in upon them.

Ver.

Ver. 9. *For with thee is the Fountain of Life: in thy Light shall we see Light.*] For thou art the Spring from whence all our Happiness comes, which thou art able to communicate for ever: and if thou wilt be favourable to us, nothing shall hinder our Joy; but we shall think our selves happy in the most disconsolate Condition.

Ver. 10. *O continue thy Loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy Righteousness to the upright in Heart.*] Vouchsafe then, O most gracious GOD, to extend thy Loving-kindness (which is so precious, that it excels all worldly Things) not only unto me, but unto all that obediently acknowledge their Dependance on thee: Never withdraw thy Favour from them, but perform thy promises to thy faithful Servants, and defend them from all the mischievous Devices of their Enemies to destroy them.

Ver. 11. *Let not the Foot of Pride come against me, and let not the Hand of the Wicked remove me.*] Make me an Example of it; and, whatsoever is secretly designed and plotted against me, let not my proud Enemy prevail, and tread me under his Feet: let not all the Power of the Wicked, that may joyn with him, be able to subvert me.

Ver. 12. *There are the Workers of Iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.*] In this Attempt I am confident they shall fail; I plainly see them baffled in this wicked Design. It is as certain, as if I already beheld it with my Eyes, that where they thought to overthrow me, they shall fall themselves: with so powerful a Hand shall they be thrown down, that they shall never recover themselves, to renew their Attempts against me any more.

PSALM XXXVII.

A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

In this Psalm (which is composed so artificially, that the Order of the Letters of the Alphabet is observed, in the first Letter of every other Verse) David *seems to intend to prevent the Scandal which some might take when they saw the wicked in Prosperity, and the godly under Affliction; (as they did sometimes;) quite contrary to the Law, which promised all good Things to those that kept it, and threatned all Evil to those that broke it. He bids them be patient, and stay a while; and they should see both verified. For the Prosperity of the Wicked shall be short: (as he over and over again bids them consider:) and the Just, if they would but wait a while, should see themselves not only delivered out of Trouble, but made very flourishing. And therefore he advises, in the first Place, that no Man by any Means suffer himself to be tempted, by the splendid Condition of the Wicked, to imitate them in their ungodly Courses: but to stick close to the Principles of Piety and Vertue, trusting in* GOD, *and committing himself to him; who will give great Satisfaction to such honest Men, in what they have at present, tho' never so little; and at last put them in Possession of all that their Hearts can desire. And to preserve themselves in this pious Temper, he shews nothing could be more available than Meekness and Humility, (which procures us, as* Theodoret *here notes, Abundance of good Things,) and to reflect on the lamentable End of the Proud and Haughty, who take unjust Courses, (as was apparent in what befel* Saul *and* Absalom, *and such like Persons.) Which sufficiently admonishes all Men to bear their present Troubles decently and well: and not to envy the prosperous Successes of the Wicked, nor to call them Blessed; but rather account them unhappy and miserable.*

The Son of Syrach *seems to have summed up this Psalm in those few Words,* Ecclus. I. 23, *&c.* A patient Man will bear for a Time, and afterwards Joy shall spring up unto him. For the Fear of the LORD is Wisdom; and Faith and Meekness are his Delight.

Ver. 1. *FRET not thy self because of evil Doers, neither be thou envious against the Workers of Iniquity.*] Let it not vex thee to see the Evil-doers in great Prosperity: nor be provoked thereby either to accuse GOD's Providence; or to think the worse of Vertue; or to imitate them in their Wickedness; or to wish thy self to be what they are.

Ver. 2. *For they shall soon be cut down like the Grass, and wither as the green Herb.*] For this Prosperity, which thou art apt to look upon with Admiration, Envy, or Anger, is so far from lasting alway, that it is but of short Continuance: They shall be cut down, on a sudden, as the Grass is by the Hand of the Mower, when it is most flourishing; or they shall fade away as the green Herb doth, which in a little Time withers, and of it self falls to Decay.

Ver. 3. *Trust in the* LORD *and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the Land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*] If you would have a firm and stable Happiness, confide in GOD, (and not in Riches, shouldst thou have them in the greatest Abundance,) doing all the Good thou art able in that Condition wherein his Providence hath placed thee: So shalt thou be settled in the good Land GOD hath given us: (when the Wicked are cut off from it,) and shalt enjoy securely all those Blessings, which he, according to his faithful Promise, will provide for thee.

Ver. 4. *Delight thy self also in the* LORD; *and he shall give thee the Desires of thine Heart.*] Be not discouraged, therefore, nor too much dejected, if thou art for the present afflicted; but rest contented with what thou hast: or rather, solace thy self in the LORD, and take a greater Delight in his Promises, than the Wicked can do in their present Possessions; and commending thy self unto him by constant Prayer, be confident he will answer thee, according to thy Heart's Desire.

Ver. 5. *Commit thy Way unto the* LORD: *trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.*] When thou hast any difficult Business in Hand, and art doubtful of the Success; or when thou knowest not what Course to take, for the accomplishing of thy honest Designs; leave all to the LORD, and trust to him in pious and upright Courses, that he will direct and assist thee, and bring Things to a good Issue.

Ver.

Ver. 6. *And he ſhall bring forth thy Righteouſneſs as the Light, and thy Judgment as the Noon-day.*] And if thou ſhouldſt be accuſed as a Man of evil Deſigns; let not that trouble thee neither: For though thy Fame may be obſcured for a Time by Calumnies and Slanders, as the Sun is by Miſts and Clouds; yet as that ſcatters them all at laſt, ſo ſhall thy Integrity appear, and ſhine as bright as the Sun at Noon-day.

Ver. 7. *Reſt in the* LORD, *and wait patiently for him: fret not thy ſelf becauſe of him who proſpereth in his Way, becauſe of the Man who bringeth wicked Devices to paſs.*] And in the mean Time, reſt ſatisfied in this, that the LORD knows thy Innocency: and do not murmur and complain if he do not preſently vindicate it: but think it becomes thee to wait upon him, with humble Submiſſion to his Will, and to ſtay as long as he pleaſes. And be ſure thou beeſt not ſo impatient, as to be irritated by the thriving Wickedneſs of the Ungodly, and the ſtrange Succeſs they have in their diſhoneſt Contrivances, to do as they do: and to follow them in their Calumnies, Fraud, Injuſtice and Oppreſſion, or any ſuch like Courſes, whereby they craftily compaſs all their Deſigns.

Ver. 8. *Ceaſe from Anger, and forſake Wrath: fret not thy ſelf in any wiſe to do evil.*] If thou perceive thy Indignation begin to ariſe, to ſee ſuch vile People ſo ſucceſsful, ſuppreſs it preſently; let it not vex and afflict thee, much leſs boil up to Wrath and furious Diſpleaſure; or if, on a ſudden, thou art ſurpriſed with ſuch a Paſſion, take Care, however, that it proceed no farther; and by no Means be ſo incenſed (I muſt repeat that Caution, it is ſo weighty) as to follow their Example in Evil-doing.

Ver. 9. *For evil Doers ſhall be cut off: but thoſe that wait upon the* LORD, *they ſhall inherit the Earth.*] For how proſperous ſoever it may prove in the Beginning, the End, aſſure thy ſelf, ſhall be lamentable. And let thoſe Evil-doers expect alſo to meet with an untimely End, and to be cut off by the Hand of Juſtice, in a remarkable Manner, from the Land of the Living: when they that follow my Advice, and wait patiently till the LORD will do them Right, ſhall poſſeſs thoſe good Things that he hath promiſed, in this Land which he hath given them for their Inheritance.

Ver. 10. *For yet a little while, and the wicked* ſhall *not* be: *yea, thou ſhalt diligently conſider his Place, and it* ſhall *not* be.] And do not think he ſtays too long before he doeth it; but if that Thought come into thy Mind, reſolve to expect yet a while longer; and ſtill believe that, after a very ſhort Time, the Wicked, who ſeem to ſtand ſo faſt, ſhall be utterly deſtroyed. When thou haſt made a ſtrict Search after him, thou ſhalt find nothing of him remaining, in the Place where thou ſaweſt him ſo flouriſhing.

Ver. 11. *But the meek ſhall inherit the Earth: and ſhall delight themſelves in the Abundance of Peace.*] Whereas they that meekly ſubmit to their preſent Afflictions, and patiently wait upon GOD, till he be pleaſed to relieve them, ſhall be ſettled at laſt in their Poſſeſſions; and lead a moſt pleaſant Life, in the greateſt Plenty of all Manner of good Things: in the Injoyment of which nothing ſhall diſturb them.

Ver. 12. *The Wicked plotteth againſt the juſt, and gnaſheth upon him with his Teeth.*] The Wicked indeed hope to hinder this; being ſo furiouſly inraged at the Juſt, that he is always contriving ſome Miſchief againſt him.

Ver. 13. *The* LORD *ſhall laugh at him, for he ſeeth that his Day is coming.*] But all his Plots and crafty Devices are ridiculous in the Eyes of the LORD, who ſees the Day of his Ruin approaching: Which will inevitably ſeize on him, before his Deſigns can take Effect.

Ver. 14. *The wicked have drawn out the Sword, and have bent their Bow to caſt down the Poor and needy,* and *to ſlay ſuch as be of upright Converſation.*] He hath numerous Partakers, indeed, who have added open Force to their ſecret Practices, and armed themſelves in a warlike Manner, for the juſt Man's utter Deſtruction; which they hope may be the more eaſily compaſſed, becauſe he is deſtitute of human Help, and will not take any crooked Ways for his own Preſervation.

Ver. 15. *Their Sword ſhall enter into their own Heart, and their Bows ſhall be broken.*] But all theſe Endeavours alſo ſhall prove in vain; and, which is more, they ſhall not only miſs their Aim, but their Sword, as we ſay, ſhall cut their own Throat; and the Evil they intended againſt the Juſt, ſhall fall upon themſelves.

Ver. 16. *A little that the righteous Man hath, is better than the Riches of many wicked.*] And as there is more Satisfaction in the little Pittance a righteous Man hath, than in all the Abundance which the greateſt Potentates have gotten by Extortion, Oppreſſion, and Violence: So that ſmall Power he hath ſhall be of more Force to protect and preſerve him, than all the Multitudes which attend upon thoſe violent Men to guard them.

Ver. 17. *For the Arms of the wicked ſhall be broken: but the* LORD *upholdeth the righteous.*] For the LORD is againſt the wicked; and be their Power never ſo great, which they have to oppreſs and deſtroy the Righteous, he will break it in Pieces; but good Men will he ſupport, be they never ſo weak; and both maintain them in what they enjoy, and encreaſe their Stock, notwithſtanding all that their Enemies can do againſt them.

Ver. 18. *The* LORD *knoweth the Days of the upright: and their Inheritance ſhall be for ever.*] He may ſeem to neglect them; but there is no Day paſſes, wherein he doth not take Care of them, and exerciſe a moſt gracious Providence over them: obſerving not only all their Afflictions, but their Patience under them; which ſhall be rewarded with the Bleſſings he hath promiſed to them, and to their Children after them.

Ver. 19. *They ſhall not be aſhamed in the evil Time: and in the Days of Famine they ſhall be ſatisfied.*] In calamitous Times, when GOD puniſhes the World by War or Peſtilence, they ſhall not be aſhamed of the Hope they have placed in GOD, that he will preſerve them; when a Famine comes and pinches others, they ſhall be ſure to have enough.

Ver. 20. *But the wicked ſhall periſh, and the Enemies of the* LORD ſhall be *as the Fat of Lambs, they ſhall conſume: into Smoke ſhall they conſume away.*] But the Wicked ſhall periſh in thoſe evil Days; for the LORD looks upon them

as his Enemies; who, when they grow rich and great, are but fatted up as Beaſts for the Slaughter, and on a ſudden melt away, as faſt as the Fat of Lambs, that is burnt upon the Altar: Juſt ſo ſhall the Divine Vengeance ſeize on them, when they are in the Fulneſs of their Proſperity; and, like that fat, they ſhall vaniſh into Smoke, and come to nothing.

Ver. 21. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous ſheweth Mercy, and giveth.*] You ſee a Man now perhaps grow Rich by wicked Arts; but he ſhall in Time be reduced to ſuch Straits, as ſhall put him to double Shame; firſt of borrowing, and then of not being able to pay at his Day: When the Righteous ſhall be ſo far from borrowing of any, that he ſhall be able to lend; nay, to exerciſe Mercy, and give freely to him that needeth.

Ver. 22. *For* ſuch as be *bleſſed of him, ſhall inherit the Earth; and* they that be *curſed of him, ſhall be cut off.*] For upon theſe GOD hath entailed a Bleſſing by his gracious Promiſes, (which ſhall certainly be fulfilled) that they and theirs ſhall enjoy the good Things of the Land; and againſt the other he hath denounced a Curſe, (which they ſhall no Ways avoid) that they ſhall be rooted out.

Ver. 23. *The Steps of a* good *Man are ordered by the* LORD: *and he delighteth in his Way.*] Let a Man but take Care that his Ways be pleaſing to the LORD, by doing what he approves; and he will proſper him in all his Undertakings, and guide his Counſels and Actions ſo, that he ſhall meet with good Succeſs.

Ver. 24. *Though he fall, he ſhall not be utterly caſt down: for the* LORD *upholdeth* him *with his Hand.*] Or if he fail ſometime of his End, he ſhall not be undone: The LORD ſtill ſupports him by his Power, that he be not diſcouraged; and relieves him by his good Providence, that he be not utterly ruin'd.

Ver. 25. *I have been young, and* now *am old: yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his Seed begging Bread.*] I ſay nothing but what I can confirm by my own long Obſervation: When I was young, I began to take Notice of it; and I continued ſo to do, till now that I am grown old: And I cannot remember, that in all my Life I ever ſaw a truly pious, juſt, and charitable Man, left deſtitute of neceſſary Things; or his Children after him reduced to ſuch Poverty, that they were conſtrained to beg from Door to Door.

Ver. 26. He is *ever merciful, and lendeth: and his Seed* is *bleſſed.*] No, he rather hath not only enough to ſupply his own Wants, but to ſpare alſo for the Relief of others; to whom he freely gives, or at leaſt lends: And is ſo unwearied in theſe Acts of Charity, that GOD rewards it with Bleſſings upon his Poſterity.

Ver. 27. *Depart from evil, and do good: and dwell for evermore.*] Take my Advice therefore, if thou wouldeſt be happy: Never do any Evil, tho' it be to gain the greateſt Advantage this World can afford; but conſtantly employ thy ſelf in good Works, eſpecially in Acts of Mercy: Tho' thereby thou mayſt ſeem to empoveriſh thy ſelf for the preſent; be aſſured, this is the Way to live a long and proſperous Life in great Tranquillity and Peace.

Ver. 28. *For the* LORD *loveth Judgment, and forſaketh not his Saints, they are preſerved for ever: but the Seed of the wicked ſhall be cut off.*] For the LORD loveth that which is Juſt and Right; and upon that Account will not forſake thoſe that are merciful, but be very merciful to them; and continue his Mercy to their Children after them, when the Poſterity of injurious and hard-hearted Men ſhall be deſtroyed.

Ver. 29. *The righteous ſhall inherit the Land, and dwell therein for ever.*] Such Wretches may flouriſh for a Time: But they that ſhall be ſettled and fixed in the Land of Promiſe, and leave it as an Inheritance to thoſe that ſucceed them, are only (as I have often ſaid) the Godly, Juſt, and Merciful Men.

Ver. 30. *The Mouth of the righteous ſpeaketh Wiſdom: and his Tongue talketh of Judgment.*] Who do good not only to Mens Bodies, but to their Souls alſo; imparting to them (eſpecially to their own Children) ſuch Precepts of vertuous Wiſdom, as teach them how to behave themſelves aright in every Action of their Life, and naturally tend to make them proſperous.

Ver. 31. *The Law of his* GOD *is in his Heart: none of his Steps ſhall ſlide.*] As appears by this righteous Man himſelf: who, making the Law of GOD (which he hath continually before his Eyes) the Rule of his Life, proceeds ſteddily to the obtaining of his End; and happily finiſhes his Courſe, without falling into thoſe Miſchiefs, into which Wickedneſs leads thoſe who have no Regard unto that Rule.

Ver. 32. *The wicked watcheth the righteous, and ſeeketh to ſlay him.*] His greateſt Danger is from ſuch lawleſs Men, who (as I have ſaid before) watch for an Opportunity, and leave no Means unattempted, (though it be by Falſeneſs and Treachery) not only to give him Trouble and Diſturbance, but to take away his Life.

Ver. 33. *The* LORD *will not leave him in his Hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.*] But the LORD will not let them have Power to do what they deſign. He will reſcue him from their Violence. Or, if they ſeek to undo him, in a Form of Law, by falſe Accuſations before the publick Judges, he will find a Means to clear his Innocence, and reverſe even the Sentence they have pronounced againſt him.

Ver. 34. *Wait on the* LORD, *and keep his Way, and he ſhall exalt thee to inherit the Land: when the wicked are cut off, thou ſhalt ſee* it.] Therefore, if I ſhould ſtudy never ſo long, I can give a good Man no better Advice than I did at firſt: Hope in GOD, (when any of theſe Troubles happen) and patiently wait for his Mercy, in a ſtedfaſt Obſervance of all his Commands. Be not moved by any Miſchiefs that Men can threaten, to go out of that Way, into which thou art directed by GOD's Law; but believe that he will at laſt, if thou perſevereſt in it, advance thee to the Poſſeſſion of all the Bleſſings it promiſeth; and thou ſhalt ſee thoſe that thought to depreſs thee, utterly deſtroy'd.

Ver. 35. *I have ſeen the wicked in great Power: and ſpreading himſelf like a green Bay-tree.*] There want not publick Examples of this in our own Days. For I my ſelf have ſeen the Wicked (ſuch as *Saul*, *Doeg*, and *Ahitophel*) in ſuch Power, that he was in no Fear that any Body could hurt

hurt him; but, quite contrary, ſtruck Terror into all: His Off-ſpring was numerous, his Poſſeſſions large, his Revenue exceeding great; being like a Tree never yet tranſplanted, that hath taken Root, and ſuck'd Abundance of the Earth, and ſpreads Juice out of its Branches every Way.

Ver. 36. *Yet he paſſed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I ſought him, but he could not be found.*] And yet, as firm as he ſeemed to ſtand, he was gone on a ſudden; he vaniſhed (it is very wonderful) juſt as you ſee a Cloud paſs away, and diſappear. I look'd about me to ſee what was become of him, and whether he might not be removed (as a Tree ſometimes is) to another Place; but there was no ſuch Man, nor any Remainder of him to be found.

Ver. 37. *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the upright: for the End of that Man is Peace.*] Do you mark then, and make it your own Obſervation, as I have made it mine; and you will find there is this great Difference between him that makes the Laws of GOD the Rule of his Life, and thoſe that tranſgreſs them: That though the former may meet with ſome Troubles for a Time; yet if they do not make him forſake his Integrity, nor in any thing ſwerve from his Duty, he ſhall in the Iſſue be very proſperous and happy.

Ver. 38. *But the Tranſgreſſours ſhall be deſtroyed together, the End of the wicked ſhall be cut off.*] But the other ſhall be utterly deſtroyed; none of them ſhall eſcape by any of their cunning Tricks and Devices, but ſhall all alike periſh; though for the preſent they may thrive in their Wickedneſs, yet in the Concluſion they ſhall be cut off both Root and Branch.

Ver. 39. *But the Salvation of the righteous is of the* LORD, he is *their Strength in the Time of Trouble.*] For the LORD, whom none can reſiſt, undertakes to be the Defender, Deliverer and Benefactor of juſt and good Men: They may ſafely depend on him for Power and Strength to ſupport and protect them, whenſoever they fall into any Diſtreſs.

Ver. 40. *And the* LORD *ſhall help them, and deliver them: he ſhall deliver them from the wicked, and ſave them becauſe they truſt in him.*] He will not fail to help them during their Troubles, and at laſt to deliver them out of them: The Wicked ſhall not be able to hinder it; but he will deliver them from all their ſecret Plots, or open Attempts to deſtroy them: He will therefore deliver them, becauſe they intirely rely on him for Safety; and will not take any other Courſe but ſuch as he allows, to ſave themſelves from Danger.

PSALM XXXVIII.

A Pſalm of *David*, to bring to Remembrance.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm was compoſed by David, *either during his Affliction, to deſire* GOD *graciouſly to remember him, (as the Title of it is,) and ſend him Deliverance: or afterward, to put himſelf in Remembrance of the Moans he made when he was in that ſad Condition; and how earneſt he then was with* GOD, *to pardon all the Sins which had brought him into it, and to releaſe him out of it; and what Hope and Confidence he then had in* GOD, *which might incourage him and all others to place the like humble Truſt in his Goodneſs for the Time to come.*

What the Affliction was, is not ſo certain as it may ſeem at firſt Sight. It is generally thought he was ſick, and that of ſome noiſome, ulcerous Diſeaſe; as in the Beginning of the Pſalm ſeveral Expreſſions, if they be taken literally, plainly enough denote. But he preſently falling into a doleful Complaint of the Malignity of his Enemies, and the Coldneſs of his Friends Affection towards him; it is thought not improbable by others, that he deſcribes the crazy Condition he was in (under the Perſecution of Saul,) *by the Languiſhment of a ſick Man under ſome dangerous Diſeaſe. And thus* Theodoret *underſtands it: only he ſuppoſes that he reflects upon the diſaſtrous things that befel him after he came to the Crown; by the Murther of his Son* Amnon, *the Rebellion of* Abſalom, *the Falſeneſs of* Ahitophel, *the abuſive Reproaches of* Shimei, *and all the other Afflictions, mentioned in his Hiſtory, which were ſent by* GOD *upon him for the Cure of his Sins. And this Senſe we muſt follow; or elſe ſay, he was at the very ſame Time ſick of a grievous Diſeaſe, when he laboured under one of thoſe Perſecutions. And ſince the Pſalm will be of larger Uſe, if we ſo interpret it; I ſhall follow that Conjecture. So I call it, becauſe we do not read of any Sickneſs* David *had; nor are we certain what the particular Sins were which he bewails in ſo ſad a Manner, that it hath made this be called one of the* Penitential Pſalms, *beginning juſt as the firſt of them doth,* Pſalm *VI.*

Ver. 1. O LORD, *rebuke me not in thy Wrath: neither chaſten me in thy hot Diſpleaſure.*] O LORD, I am ſorely afflicted; and it is but juſt I ſhould be ſo. Yet let me prevail with thee for ſo much Mercy, as not to proceed to any farther Severity: or if thou doſt, yet ſtill to mitigate it with ſome Favour, that I may not ſuffer in the utmoſt Extremity.

Ver. 2. *For thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy Hand preſſeth me ſore.*] For (beſide the Trouble which my Enemies give me without) the Pains I already endure in my Body are exceeding ſharp, and touch me to the very quick: Thou haſt inflicted on me a heavy Puniſhment, which preſſes me down to the Ground.

Ver. 3. There is *no Soundneſs in my Fleſh, becauſe of thine Anger: neither* is there *any reſt in my Bones, becauſe of my Sin.*] There is no Part of my Body, but feels the ſad Effects of thy Diſpleaſure which my Sins have ſo provoked, that I am in perpetual Pain, without any Intermiſſion.

Ver. 4. *For mine Iniquities are gone over mine Head: as an heavy Burthen they are too heavy for me.*] They have brought a great Number of Evils upon me, which like a Deluge have overwhelmed me; and lie upon me as an intolerable Burthen, under which I am ready to ſink, unleſs thou ſupport me.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *My Wounds ſtink,* and *are corrupt: becauſe of my Fooliſhneſs.*] I am full of Ulcers, and they are full of putrified Matter, which grows noiſome and offenſive to me; as a juſt Reward of my Folly, whereby, to ſatisfy my unreaſonable Deſires, I have inconſiderately offended thee, (2. *Sam.* XI. 2, 3, 4.)

Ver. 6. *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the Day-long.*] I am not able to go upright, being grown crooked beyond Meaſure: The Poſture of a Mourner, who goes, or rather creeps, ſoftly, and bowed down, is mine continually.

Ver. 7. *For my Loins are filled with a loathſome* Diſeaſe: *and* there is *no Soundneſs in my Fleſh.*] Fiery Boiles break out in the Parts about my Loins: And though there be ſo many of them, that one would think all the ill Humours were run thither; yet in the reſt of my Body, as I ſaid before, there is no Part but is out of Order.

Ver. 8. *I am feeble and ſore broken: I have roared by Reaſon of the Diſquietneſs of my Heart.*] I am exceedingly weak, and worn away with Pain and Grief; wherewith my Heart is ſo perpetually tormented, that I roar, rather than ſigh, and groan and cry under the apparent Anguiſh of it.

Ver. 9. LORD, *all my Deſire* is *before thee: and my groaning is not hid from thee.*] But why do I complain in this Manner, and make ſuch a particular Enumeration of my Sufferings: Thou, LORD, underſtandeſt what I want, and what I would have: Though I ſhould ſay never a Word, all my Miſeries, and the Sighs they have coſt me, are not unknown to thee.

Ver. 10. *My Heart panteth, my Strength faileth me: as for the Light of mine Eyes, it alſo is gone from me.*] Thou ſeeſt the great Agitation of my Mind, which wanders up and down in reſtleſs Thought, but all to no purpoſe; for my Strength hath forſaken me: The Light of my Eyes is ſo weak, that I can ſcarce make any Uſe of them.

Ver. 11. *My Lovers and my Friends ſtand aloof from my Sore: and my Kinſmen ſtand afar off.*] And if I could, I ſhould ſee none of thoſe whom one would expect, in ſuch a Condition, to come and comfort me: 2 *Sam.* XV. 31. For I am deſerted by thoſe who profeſſed great Love to me; yea, they with whom I contracted a Friendſhip and intimate Familiarity, neglect me; and ſuch whom Nature hath inclined to pity and relieve me, keep at a Diſtance, and give me no Aſſiſtance in my Affliction.

Ver. 12. *They alſo that ſeek after my Life, lay Snares* for me: *and they that ſeek my Hurt, ſpeak miſchievous Things, and imagine Deceits all the Day-long.*] Mean while my Enemies are very buſie, and imploy all their Subtilty to find a Way how to make an End of this miſerable Life of mine: They diſcourſe of nothing elſe, but what Miſchief they may do me; and what they cannot do by Force, they are continually contriving how to compaſs by Fraud and Deceit.

Ver. 13. *But I, as a deaf* Man, *heard not; and* I was *as a dumb Man* that *openeth not his Mouth.*] I wanted not Information how they calumniated me; but was ſo oppreſſed with the Weight of my other Afflictions, and of thoſe Sins which have brought them upon me, that I took no Notice of it: But lay as if I were deaf, and heard not what they ſaid; or dumb, and could not make an Anſwer.

Ver. 14. *Thus I was as a Man that heareth not, and in whoſe Mouth* are *no Reproofs.*] I was as ſilent, I ſay, as if I knew nothing of their falſe Accuſations, or as if I were not able to confute them.

Ver. 15. *For in thee,* O LORD, *do I hope: thou wilt hear, O* LORD *my* GOD.] For, notwithſtanding all my Sins, and thy ſore Diſpleaſure which I feel againſt them, I have a good Hope in thee, O LORD, that thou wilt plead my Cauſe. I leave them therefore to thee, O LORD, who art the righteous Judge; and as thou haſt in Juſtice afflicted me, ſo wilt thou, I doubt not, make them know that they have wrongfully charged me.

Ver. 16. *For I ſaid,* Hear me, *leaſt* otherwiſe *they ſhould rejoice over me: when my Foot ſlippeth, they magnifie* themſelves *againſt me.*] I ſtill conclude with my ſelf, that, as bad as I am, and as low as thou haſt laid me, thou wilt not think fit to let them inſult over me, and brag that they have got the better of me.

Ver. 17. *For I* am *ready to halt, and my Sorrow* is *continually before me.*] As they are in Danger now to do; for I am ſo weak every Way, that I am ready to fall; and have nothing but a ſad Proſpect of Ruin before mine Eyes.

Ver. 18. *For I will declare mine Iniquity; I will be ſorry for my Sin.*] I know, and do confeſs, that I have deſerved it by my Iniquity: Which when I conſider, (and nothing elſe,) I have Reaſon to fear the worſt that they can do unto me.

Ver. 19. *But mine Enemies* are *lively,* and *they are ſtrong: and they that hate me wrongfully, are multiplied.*] And what cannot they do, who, while I lie in this weak and miſerable Condition, are Flouriſhing and Proſperous, Strong and Mighty; and by falſe Rumours, make me ſtill more odious to the Multitude, and increaſe their Forces againſt me.

Ver. 20. *They alſo that render Evil for Good, are mine Adverſaries: becauſe I follow the Thing that good is.*] With which are joined, even thoſe whom I have highly obliged; who do not think it bad enough not to be my Friends, but are become my Adverſaries: For no other Reaſon, that I can find, but becauſe I make a Conſcience of what I do, and faithfully ſtudy, and earneſtly ſeek the Good of all this Kingdom.

Ver. 21. *Forſake me not,* O LORD: *O my* GOD, *be not far from me.*] I humbly therefore betake my ſelf to thee, O LORD, beſeeching thee, that thou wilt not deſert me, as they have done. O my GOD, who haſt been very gracious to me on ſundry Occaſions, and ſeeſt that I ſtill depend entirely upon thee, let not my Sins make thee to abandon me.

Ver. 22. *Make haſte to help me, O* LORD *my Salvation.*] But rather let my Miſery, and the imminent Danger I am in, move thee ſpeedily to relieve me. Defer no longer, O LORD, whoſe Property it is to deliver thoſe who have none to help them, and truſt in thee alone, as I now do, for Safety and Preſervation.

PSALM

PSALM XXXIX.

To the Chief Muſician, to *Jeduthun.* A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

It is thought by ſome, that this Pſalm (which David *delivered afterward to* Jeduthun, *an excellent Muſician, and Governour of the Muſick in the Tabernacle,* 1 Chron. *XXV.) was made upon the ſame Occaſion with the foregoing. And ſo in Part it was; for though there is little Reaſon to think that he was ſtill ſick when he compoſed it, (as they imagine;) yet his Enemies, it is manifeſt, preſſed him ſorely. And the Conſideration of the flouriſhing Condition wherein they were, though very wicked, (whilſt he, a pious Servant of* God, *was lamentably afflicted) put him into ſome Commotion, notwithſtanding his Reſolution to the contrary; till the Thoughts of the Shortneſs of Man's Life, and conſequently of his Sufferings, and how eaſy it was for* God *to cut off his Enemies, compoſed his Spirit again, and made him patient, and contented with his preſent Condition.*

So that this Pſalm ſeems to me to be rather of the ſame kind with the XXXVIIth, than the XXXVIIIth. Only there David *gives Counſel to others, after* God *had delivered him from many Perſecutions, to be patient by his Example: But here he himſelf puts that Counſel in Practice, (perhaps when the Rebellion of* Abſalom *renewed his Trouble, which is the Opinion of* Theodoret) *though he ſhews it is very difficult, on ſome Occaſions, not to be very much diſturbed at wicked Mens Proſperity, and good Mens Affliction, eſpecially when it comes to be a Man's own Caſe, under ſome grievous Calamity.*

Ver. 1. [*I Said, I will take heed to my Ways, that I ſin not with my Tongue: I will keep my Mouth with a Bridle, while the Wicked is before me.*] It is a very great Povocation to Anger and Diſcontent, to ſee the Wicked ſtill continue proſperous, and to hear how they abuſe and calumniate me. But I reſolved with my ſelf not to be vexed at it; but rather to take Care, as I have exhorted others, (*Pſal.* XXXVII.) to be more inoffenſive in all my Actions; and eſpecially to watch over my Tongue, and to lay the ſtricteſt Reſtraint upon it, that no undecent Complaint, no irreverent Diſcourſe about God's Providence, no, nor any intemperate Speeches againſt my Adverſaries, ſhould proceed out of my Mouth, 2 *Sam.* XVI. 8, 13.

Ver. 2. [*I was dumb with Silence, I held my Peace,* even *from Good, and my Sorrow was ſtirred.*] And this Purpoſe I kept for ſome Time ſo ſtedfaſtly, that I ſpake not a Word either good or bad, but remain'd like a dumb Man in perfect Silence; being ſo afraid of breaking out into impatient Language againſt my unjuſt Accuſers, that I would not ſo much as vindicate my ſelf, and clear my Innocence. Though the Truth is, while I thus denied all Vent to my inward Grief, (which I could not quite ſuppreſs) it was the more encreaſed.

Ver. 3. [*My Heart was hot within me, while I was muſing the Fire burned: then ſpake I with my Tongue.*] For though I *ſaid* nothing, yet I could not chuſe but have many ſad *Thoughts* of the Injuries I ſuffered; and muſing long upon them, and upon the Impunity of thoſe who committed them, my Sorrow grew ſo great at laſt, that it could no longer be pent up; but, burning like a Fire with vehement Heat in my Breaſt, it broke forth into ſuch Expreſſions as theſe;

Ver. 4. [*Lord, make me to know mine End, and the Meaſure of my Days, what it is: that I may know how frail I* am.] Lord, I do not murmur nor repine at my Sufferings; but that I may be able to bear them ſtill patiently, make me ſenſible, I humbly beſeech thee, how ſhort this frail Life is, and how ſoon it will have an End; that duly conſidering this, I may be the leſs concern'd about the Miſeries I endure, which will end together with it.

Ver. 5. [*Behold, thou haſt made my Days* as *an Hand-breadth, and mine Age* is *as nothing before thee: verily, every Man at his beſt State* is *altogether Vanity. Selah.*] And it is ſtrange I ſhould forget it, ſeeing it is ſo apparent thou haſt circumſcribed my Days within a very narrow Compaſs, and that, compared with thy eternal Duration, they are juſt nothing. Beſides, there is no Man ſo ſtrong, ſo firm, but he may die in an inſtant, (as my Enemies may do) in the Height of his Proſperity, and moſt flouriſhing Condition: For be he never ſo ſettled as he thinks in his Greatneſs, it is certain he is mere Emptineſs and Vanity.

Ver. 6. [*Surely every Man walketh in a vain Shew: ſurely they are diſquieted in vain: he heapeth up* Riches, *and knoweth not who ſhall gather them.*] What an imaginary Thing then is the Life of Man? who promiſes himſelf mighty Matters, but hath no more than the Image and Shadow of them in his Brain; for on a ſudden he himſelf vaniſhes, and is gone: Yet for theſe he makes a lamentable Buſtle and Stir, whereby, if he get any Thing, alas! it is to very ſmall purpoſe; for after all the Pains he hath taken to heap up Wealth, he hath no certainty whether he ſhall live to enjoy it; no, nor whether his Son, or his Kindred (for perhaps a Stranger, nay, his Enemy) ſhall poſſeſs it.

Ver. 7. [*And now, Lord, what wait I for? my Hope is in thee.*] And therefore I am reſolved, O Lord, with thy gracious Aſſiſtance, not to trouble my ſelf ſo much as I have done about theſe vain and uncertain Things: For what is there even in a Kingdom, that I ſhould deſire and expect it impatiently, which may ſo ſoon be loſt again? I have done with all theſe empty Hopes, and content my ſelf with this alone; that thou wilt not forſake me, but be my gracious God, and chuſe what is beſt for me.

Ver. 8. [*Deliver me from all my Tranſgreſſions, make me not the Reproach of the Fooliſh.*] And, firſt, I hope thou wilt forgive me all thoſe Sins, which have juſtly deſerved theſe heavy Puniſhments: And then ſhew me ſo much Favour, that wicked Men, who are ſo fooliſh, that they underſtand not thy Meaning in theſe Afflictions which have befaln me, but imagine thou haſt caſt me off, may not make me their Laughing-ſtock, nor mock at my Reliance on thee, and patient Submiſſion to thee.

Ver. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth; because thou didst it.*] For I did not complain, but silently endure their insolent and scurrilous Language, together with all my other Sufferings; reverencing thy Justice, by whom every Thing is ordered: (2 *Sam.* XVI. 10.) and this they interpreted to be yielding the Cause, and justifying their Proceedings against me.

Ver. 10. *Remove thy Stroke away from me: I am consumed by the Blow of thine Hand.*] May it please thee, therefore, who hath inflicted sore Judgments on me, at length to remove them: put a speedy End to them; (if thou intendest to confute their foolish Reproaches;) because I cannot long subsist under such a Burthen, as hath already taken away all my Strength from me.

Ver. 11. *When thou with Rebukes dost correct Man for Iniquity, thou makest his Beauty to consume away like a Moth: surely every Man is Vanity. Selah.*] And indeed, who is able to contend with thee, if thou wilt not graciously remit the Punishment we deserve? For when thou chastisest Man, (in any of those Ways whereby thou hast threatned to rebuke his Extravagance) his Wealth, his Power, and whatsoever else he hath that is valuable, moulders away like a Garment that is Moth-eaten: and it is no Wonder; for the greatest of Men, as well as the meanest, are but mere Vanity.

Ver. 12. *Hear my Prayer, O* Lord, *and give ear unto my Cry, hold not thy Peace at my Tears: for I am a Stranger with thee, and a Sojourner, as all my Fathers were.*] But let even this move thee, O Lord, to grant my Petition which I make for Pardon, and Release from this Chastisement. Because I am so frail; (as all my Fore-fathers were;) and our Time here is so very short, that I am more like a Stranger and Sojourner in this Countrey, than an Inhabitant or Lord of it; (as I lately thought my self:) therefore grant my earnest Request: and when I say nothing, but silently submit to thy Correction; let my Tears speak for me, and prevail with thee for some Mercy.

Ver. 13. *O spare me, that I may recover Strength, before I go hence, and be no more.*] Forbear me, I beseech thee, and do not proceed thus to afflict me: But repair the Decays that are in my Strength, and let the very few Days I have to live be more peaceable; that, free from the Disturbance my Enemies give me, I may do thee some small Service before I leave the World, and have nothing to do in it any more.

PSALM XL.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm of David, *directed to the Chief Master of Musick, for the Use of the Tabernacle. Wherein he thankfully acknowledges* God's *Goodness to him, in delivering him from some great Danger (it is not certain what: But may be applied either to the Distress he was reduced into by his Enemies, as we read in the Psalm foregoing; or to the Sickness* God *had inflicted on him; or to both, mentioned Psalm XXXVIII.) And then declares his Resolution to serve* God *faithfully and chearfully, in such Words as may be better applied to* Christ's *Readiness to do the Will of* God, *though it were by dying for us.*

But it seems this Deliverance was not so compleat, but that still he was infested with many Enemies; and therefore, in the latter Part of the Psalm, he commends himself still to God's *merciful Providence: beseeching him to finish what he had begun, by continuing to be his Deliverer.*

Ver. 1. *I waited patiently for the* Lord, *and he inclined unto me, and heard my Cry.*] It is good, I see, to persevere in Prayer, and with Constancy and Patience to wait upon the Lord; for though he hath made me expect very long, yet at last he hath been graciously pleased to condescend unto me, and to grant my Desire.

Ver. 2. *He brought me up also out of a horrible Pit, out of the miry Clay, and set my Feet upon a Rock, and established my Goings.*] For when I was in the greatest Distress, and no more able to help my self than a Man who is fain into a very deep Pit, where he sticks fast also in the stiffest Clay; he not only delivered me from that present Danger, which was very dreadful; but brought me into a Place of Safety, and withal confirmed me in it, that I might not fall again into the like Extremity:

Ver. 3. *And he hath put a new Song in my Mouth,* even *Praise unto our* God: *many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the* Lord.] But have Liberty in Quiet and Peace to meditate his Praises, and to indite a new Song in Honour of our God; who hath, to all other Benefits, added this late wonderful Preservation: which shall excite many others, when they duly consider it, to join together with me in his Worship and Service; and patiently to depend upon him, and hope in his Mercy, as I have done.

Ver. 4. *Blessed is the Man that maketh the* Lord *his Trust: and respecteth not the Proud, nor such as turn aside to Lyes.*] And happy is that Man, notwithstanding all the Troubles he may endure, who reposes his Confidence in the Lord alone: and neither envies the Success of insolent and deceitful Men; nor is tempted thereby to imitate them in their Pride, and in their Perfidiousness.

Ver. 5. *Many, O* Lord *my* God, *are thy wonderful Works,* which *thou hast done, and thy Thoughts* which *are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in Order unto thee: if I would declare and speak* of them, *they are more than can be numbred.*] Many are the Benefits, O mighty Lord, and my most gracious God, which thou hast bestowed upon such faithful Servants; for whom thou hast done Wonders, and still designest great and many Kindnesses, which cannot be comprehended, much less expressed, by our Weakness. Whensoever I attempt to make thee some Acknowledgment for such inestimable Favours, I find it is beyond my Power, so much as to tell the Number of them.

Ver. 6. *Sacrifice and Offering thou didst not desire, mine Ears hast thou opened: Burnt Offering and Sin Offering hast thou not required.*] There are no Peace-Offerings (whereby we are wont to testifie

teſtifie our Thankfulneſs for thy Mercies) nor any Oblations, which attend upon them that are worthy to be preſented unto thee; or are a fit Expreſſion of our Gratitude for ſo many and ſo great Benefits as I have received from thee. A ready and conſtant Obedience to thee, in thy faithful Service, is far more acceptable; to which as I am by Nature tyed, and thou haſt by thy Mercies ſtrongly engaged me, ſo I do freely conſent, and chearfully devote my ſelf (as the Lord CHRIST hereafter will do entirely:) If I ſhould add all other Kinds of Sacrifice, whole Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices for Sin, I ſee of how little Value they are with thee.

Ver. 7. *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come: in the Volume of the Book it is written of me.*] And therefore when I thought what thou mighteſt juſtly expect from me, after this great Deliverance, immediately I ſaid (as if I had heard thee calling upon me, to do thee ſome extraordinary Service) behold I come to make an Offering of my ſelf unto thee (as the Lord CHRIST will do, even of his very Blood.) For ſo the Book of the Law requires; (wherein this Sacrifice of CHRIST is more plainly deſcribed.)

Ver. 8. *I delight to do thy Will, O my* GOD: *yea, thy Law is within my Heart.*] That I ſhould do what is pleaſing and acceptable to thee, O my GOD, (as the Lord CHRIST will do more perfectly) though it be never ſo difficult and troubleſome to me: And ſo I will moſt gladly, with all my Soul: for there thy Law is written, and not only in my Book. (*Deut.* XVII. 18, 19.)

Ver. 9. *I have preached Righteouſneſs in the great Congregation: lo, I have not refrained my Lips, O* LORD, *thou knoweſt.*] And as an Earneſt of it, I have already proclaimed to all thy People, in their full Aſſemblies, what great Obligations I have unto thee: Behold, O LORD, I appeal to thee, who canſt not be deceived, how forward I have been to offer to thee, on all Occaſions, this publick Sacrifice of Praiſe, for all thy Benefits beſtowed upon me.

Ver. 10. *I have not hid thy Righteouſneſs within my Heart, I have declared thy Faithfulneſs and thy Salvation: I have not concealed thy Loving-kindneſs, and thy Truth from the great Congregation.*] I have not thought it ſufficient to meditate alone by my ſelf upon thy Loving-kindneſs, which hath mightily affected my Heart; but I have made known to others how faithfully thou haſt performed thy Promiſes in the wonderful Deliverance thou haſt lately given me: This ſingular Kindneſs and Fidelity I have openly publiſhed to all thy People, in their moſt frequent Aſſemblies, at the ſolemn Feſtivals.

Ver. 11. *With-hold not thou thy tender Mercies from me, O* LORD: *let thy Loving-kindneſs and thy Truth continually preſerve me.*] Be thou pleaſed, O mighty LORD, as readily, openly, and abundantly to expreſs thy tender Mercy towards me: Let that Loving-kindneſs and Faithfulneſs, which I have ſo much magnified, be ever ſeen in my continued Preſervation and Deliverance from all future Dangers.

Ver. 12. *For innumerable Evils have compaſſed me about, mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up: they are more than the Hairs of mine Head, therefore my Heart faileth me.*] For I am not yet ſo compleatly happy, but that I ſee my Enemies are ſo buſy in contriving more Miſchief againſt me; that Dangers without Number ſurround me. And indeed my Sins are ſo many, that it is but juſt I ſhould feel the Fruit of them in multiplied Puniſhments; which have ſuddenly ſeized on me, and grown to ſuch a Number, that as I may ſooner tell how many Hairs I have on my Head, than how many Troubles I ſuffer, ſo I am ready to faint under the Burthen of them.

Ver. 13. *Be pleaſed, O* LORD, *to deliver me: O* LORD, *make Haſte to help me.*] Till I think of thee, O LORD, who, I hope, wilt be ſtill pleaſed to deliver me; yea, thou haſt been ſo very good to me, that I take the humble Boldneſs to beſeech thee, O LORD, to deliver me ſpeedily.

Ver. 14. *Let them be aſhamed and confounded together, that ſeek after my Soul to deſtroy it: let them be driven backward, and put to Shame, that wiſh me evil.*] Let them all be alike moſt ſhamefully diſappointed that reſtleſly endeavour to take away my Life: Defeat them, and put them to Flight, with open Diſgrace, whoever they be that ſtudy to do me any Miſchief.

Ver. 15. *Let them be deſolate for a Reward of their Shame, that ſay unto me, Aha, aha.*] Let utter Deſolation be the Recompence of all their ſhameful Deeds, whereby they thought to have expoſed me to Shame; when they inſulted over me, and made a Mock, both of my Affliction, and of my Truſt in thee.

Ver. 16. *Let all thoſe that ſeek after thee, rejoice and be glad in thee: let ſuch as love thy Salvation, ſay continually, The* LORD *be magnified.*] But let all thoſe that depend on thee alone, and ſeek for Safety by no other Means but thoſe which thou alloweſt, have perpetual Cauſe to rejoice in thee exceedingly: Let ſuch as expect and delight to ſee thee appear for the Deliverance of thy People, never ceaſe to ſay, the LORD be praiſed; let the Glory of his wonderful Works be every where publiſhed and extolled.

Ver. 17. *But I* am *Poor and Needy, yet the* LORD *thinketh upon me: thou* art *my Help and my Deliverer, make no tarrying, O my* GOD.] As for my ſelf, this is my never-failing Comfort, that though I am ſtript of all, and quite deſtitute of humane Help, yet the LORD takes Care of me, and conſults my good: And it is ſufficient, that thou LORD art my GOD, on whom I depend for Relief and Deliverance; O delay not to ſend it to me.

PSALM XLI.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

Though ſome will have this Pſalm to have been compoſed by David, *and delivered to the Chief Maſter of Muſick, only upon Occaſion of that great Strait, into which he was brought by the Rebellion of his Son* Abſalom; *yet is it the more common Opinion, and ſeems more probable, that he had been alſo lately very ſick. And then finding by ſad Experience, what an*

Aggra-

Aggravation it was of his Affliction, to ſee his Enemies ſo barbarous as to rejoice at it; and wiſh his Death; nay, his Friends, eſpecially ſome one particular Friend, (who was a Type of the Traitor Judas*) not only to take no Pity on him, but prove falſe and perfidious to him: He, in the firſt Place, highly commends and bleſſes that Temper of Mind, which inclines Men to be pitiful and compaſſionate to thoſe that are ſick, and aſſures ſuch Perſons that they ſhall feel the happy Fruits of it; and then complains moſt heavily of their Inhumanity, who inſulted over him in his Calamity, and with reproachful Words, and vile Calumnies, exaſperated the Grief of his Mind. On which he hoped* GOD*, who loves merciful Men, would take Compaſſion, and put him into a Condition to chaſtiſe their Inſolence.*

Ver. 1. [*Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the Poor: the* LORD *will deliver him in Time of Trouble.*] Happy is that tender hearted Man, who prudently conſidering it may be his own Condition, doth not deſpiſe, but viſit the Sick, eſpecially ſuch as are poor, and takes Care to comfort and relieve them. The LORD will requite his Kindneſs, and ſend him the like Succour and Relief when he falls into any Danger.

Ver. 2. [*The* LORD *will preſerve him, and keep him alive,* and *he ſhall be bleſſed upon the Earth; and thou wilt not deliver him into the Will of his Enemies.*] In ſickly Times, or other publick Calamity, the LORD will preſerve his Life; and more than that, will make him live in Proſperity upon the Earth; which when the Envy and Hatred of his Enemies endeavour to deſtroy, the LORD will diſappoint them, and not ſuffer them to have their Will on him.

Ver. 3. [*The* LORD *will ſtrengthen him upon the Bed of Languiſhing: thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickneſs.*] Or if any Sickneſs (as no Man can expect always to be in Health) bring him into ſuch a languiſhing Condition, that he cannot help himſelf, the LORD will ſupport him, and give him Patience: Then thou wilt remarkably requite his officious Care about the Sick, (whoſe Bed he was wont to turn and ſmooth for his ſofter Repoſe) by giving him Eaſe and Refreſhment during his Weakneſs, till thou change it again into Health and Strength.

Ver. 4. [*I ſaid,* LORD*, be merciful unto me: heal my Soul, for I have ſinned againſt thee.*] In Confidence of this, I my ſelf, when I was ſick, addreſſed my Prayer unto the LORD, and implored his Mercy, ſaying, take Pity upon me, (who have not been negligent in this Duty, *Pſal.* XXXV. 13, 14.) and do not deal in ſtrict Juſtice with me; but though I have been a grievous Offender, and ſo deſerved a heavier Stroke, graciouſly pardon all that I have done amiſs, and reſtore me again to my former Health.

Ver. 5. [*Mine Enemies ſpeak evil of me: When ſhall he die, and his Name periſh?*] I am the fitter Object of thy Compaſſion, becauſe my Enemies have none at all; but to the Affliction which thou haſt laid upon me, add their Defamations, and imprecate more Evils to befal me: For nothing will ſatisfy them but my Death; which they impatiently long to ſee, and hope to bury my Reputation together with me.

Ver. 6. [*And if he come to ſee* me, *he ſpeaketh Vanity: his Heart gathereth Iniquity to it ſelf,* when *he goeth abroad, he telleth it.*] If any of them indeed come to ſee me, he ſeems to be ſorry for me, and condoles with me; but there is nothing but Fraud and Deceit under theſe fair Words which he beſtows upon me: For all the Time that he either counſels or comforts me, or makes any Promiſes of what he will do for me, he is hatching ſome Miſchief in his Heart againſt me, from what he can gather out of my Words, or Actions, or Diſeaſe; and as ſoon as he is out of my Doors, he ſpreads it abroad among his Companions, to encreaſe their Hatred, or their Contempt of me.

Ver. 7. [*All that hate me, whiſper together againſt me: againſt me do they deviſe my Hurt.*] Which diſcovers it ſelf in their private Aſſemblies, where they ſecretly conſer how to undo me: They have no other Buſineſs there, but to contrive what Uſe they ſhall make of his Information for my Ruin.

Ver. 8. [*An evil Diſeaſe,* ſay they, *cleaveth faſt unto him: and* now *that he lieth, he ſhall riſe up no more.*] This is the Time, ſay they; for now GOD hath met with him, and puniſht his heinous Sins with a grievous Diſeaſe; which ſticks as faſt to him as our Reports, (which the People believe, and he will never be able to confute) and hath laid him ſo low, that he cannot poſſibly recover.

Ver. 9. [*Yea, mine own familiar Friend in whom I truſted, which did eat of my Bread, hath lift up* his *Heel againſt me.*] And, which is ſtill more afflictive, the Man with whom I never had any Quarrel, but rather uſed as a Friend; he in whom I repoſed the greateſt Confidence, (2 *Sam.* XVI. 23.) who was one of my Family, and was maintain'd by my Service, hath in a brutiſh Manner, not only forſaken me, but (like a Horſe that kicks at him that feeds him) contemptuouſly lifted up himſelf againſt me.

Ver. 10. [*But thou, O* LORD*, be merciful unto me, and raiſe me up, that I may requite them.*] But all this doth not diſcourage me when I think of thy Mercy, O LORD; which as I moſt humbly implore, ſo thou art wont to ſhew to thoſe that are merciful. I am not ſo low, (*v.* 8.) but, contrary to their Expectation, thou art able to raiſe me up, and reſtore me to my Throne, from whence they have driven me; and then I ſhall puniſh them, according as my Office, and their Wickedneſs requires.

Ver. 11. [*By this I know that thou favoureſt me, becauſe mine Enemy doth not triumph over me.*] And truly I take this to be an Argument of thy kind Intentions towards me, that hitherto thou haſt marvellouſly preſerv'd me, both in this Sickneſs and in all other Dangers; ſo that my Enemy hath miſſed the Triumph he hoped for in my Ruin.

Ver. 12. [*And as for me, thou upholdeſt me in mine Integrity, and ſetteth me before thy Face for ever.*] The Triumph belongs to me, who thankfully acknowledge, that thou haſt ſupported me, and defended my Innocence: Thou haſt taken ſuch a ſpecial Care of me, that I hope I ſhall ſerve thee all my Days, without interruption, in that Office thou haſt committed to me.

Ver.

Ver. 13. *Blessed be the* LORD GOD *of Israel, from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.*] For which, and all other his Benefits, let the great LORD of all the World, the GOD of *Israel*, whom he hath chosen for his own peculiar People, be most heartily blessed and praised: let him be blessed throughout all Generations, as long as the World shall last, and unto all Eternity: Let him be blessed; let him be blessed; (again and again I repeat it with most fervent Affection) and let all his People concur with me in these Desires, and with one Consent accompany me with their joyful Acclamations, saying, The LORD be praised, the LORD be praised.

The End of the First Book.

The Second Book of *Psalms.*

PSALM XLII.

To the Chief Musician. *Maschil*, for the Sons of *Korah.*

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the Second *of the* Five *Books of Psalms, according to the Hebrew Division. All those of the former Book, except* Four, *have the Name of* David *prefixed to them, as the Author of them: and so were put together by him that collected them, into one Volume. But in this* Second *Book, the first part of it consists of Psalms intituled to the Sons of* Korah; *as several learned Men understand the Inscriptions: who imagine that some holy Men among them Composed these Psalms, in the time of the Captivity. But I shall follow our English Translation, and take this Psalm (as the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin do) to be directed to the Sons of* Korah, *to be set or sung by them, under the Chief Master of Musick in the Tabernacle. And then there is little question to be made, but* David *indited this, and some of the Psalms, which have this Title: as it is certain he did most, if not all, of those that are contained in the latter part of this Second Book, from Psalm the Fiftieth, to the end of the LXXII. And this present Psalm, with that which follows, seems to have been penned, either when he was under the Persecution of* Saul, *or (which is more probable) when he was driven again from the House of God by* Absalom. *Which sad Condition he bewails, with a great Mixture of Grief, for his Banishment from those sweet Injoyments he had there; and of hope to be restored to them again.*

This Psalm is the Second of those XIII. *which are called* Maschil *(see Psal.* XXXII.*) by some here taken to be an Epithet of the Master of Musick, who taught or instructed the Sons of* Korah *very skilfully.*

Ver. 1. *AS the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O* GOD.] The hunted Deer doth not long more earnestly, and cry more loudly for the Brooks of Water, to quench her Thirst; than my Soul doth for the happy Injoyment of thee, my GOD, in the publick Solemnities; from whence I am driven by those that seek my Life.

Ver. 2. *My Soul thirsteth for* GOD, *for the living* GOD: *when shall I come and appear before* GOD?] It is not my Throne of which I am so desirous, as the Place where thou my GOD dwellest: who art the eternal Spring of Life and Comfort, which no other GOD can communicate. O how vehemently doth my Soul long for thee; and how tedious doth the Time of my Banishment from thee seem! O when shall I see that happy Day, wherein I shall be restored to the Liberty again, of presenting my self before thee in thy Tabernacle?

Ver. 3. *My Tears have been my Meat Day and Night, while they continually say unto me,* Where is *thy* GOD.] There I was wont with great Delight to feast with thee; but now my Appetite fails me to my daily Food: instead of which, my only Satisfaction is in Tears; to which I have wholly abandoned my self. For what can be more grievous than to hear them say, I am abandoned by thee? (2 *Sam.* XVI. 7, 8.) and to be continually reproached and derided with this taunting Question, What is become of thy GOD, of whose Favour thou wast wont to boast?

Ver. 4. *When I remember these things, I pour out my Soul in me: for I had gone with the Multitude, I went with them to the House of* GOD, *with the Voice of Joy and Praise, with a Multitude that kept holy-day.*] O what a sad Thought is it, to call to mind those pleasant Days which are past and gone! particularly when I brought the Ark to thy Dwelling-Place, with the joyful Shout of all thy People: who in a pompous manner accompanied me with their Praises and Thanksgivings at that Festival Solemnity. (1 *Chron.* XV. 25, 28.) It even breaks my Heart with Grief to remember this Thing, and all the other Sacred Times, when before this Banishment we met together at thy House, to worship and acknowledge thee for all thy Benefits.

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in* GOD, *for I shall yet praise him for the Help of his Countenance.* And why may I not expect the like again? It is true, my Soul, these are very sad and melancholy Reflections; but must I therefore be utterly dejected? Is there any Cause that Anxiety of Mind should make thee so tumultuous, as if all Hopes of this Felicity were lost for ever? Trust in GOD, and patiently wait upon him; for the Time will come when I shall go to his House, and praise him still for his Favour towards me; in delivering me from this as well as all my former Afflictions.

Ver. 6. *O my* GOD, *my Soul is cast down within me; therefore will I remember thee from the*

Land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the Hill Mizar.] O my most gracious God, thou seest how I chide my self for it; and yet I am overcome with Grief, and should be quite oppressed, while I am forced to hide my self in this Wilderness beyond *Jordan.* (2 *Sam.* XVII. 22, 29.) and wander up and down in these solitary Mountains, far distant from thy Tabernacle: did I not comfort my self with the Thoughts of thy Goodness and Power; whom I have served there.

Ver. 7. *Deep calleth unto Deep at the Noise of thy Water-spouts: all thy Waves and thy Billows are gone over me.*] I am fain into a bottomless Depth of Miseries; which follow one upon another, as if the former invited the next to succeed it: They gush in upon me by thy Appointment, with such Violence, as Spouts of Water do out of a Cloud. I am tossed like one upon a tempestuous Sea, where the Waves rage and swell so high, that every Billow threatens to overwhelm and bury me in the Deep.

Ver. 8. *Yet the* LORD *will command his loving Kindness in the Day-time, and in the Night his Song* shall be *with me, and my Prayer unto the* GOD *of my Life.*] Yet I do not distrust the loving-Kindness of the LORD; by whose Authority this Tempest shall be appeased. He will in much Mercy order and dispose Things so, that Night and Day I shall have perpetual Cause to sing his Praise: and therefore I will commend my self to him continually, who is the Author of my Life, and beseech him to preserve it.

Ver. 9. *I will say unto* GOD *my Rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning, because of the Oppression of the Enemy?*] I will take the Boldness also to expostulate with him, saying; O GOD, I have alway made thee my Refuge; and thought my self safer under thy Protection, than if I had been in the strongest Fortress; why then dost thou delay thy Help, as if thou tookest no further Care of me? why do I still continue in that mournful Condition, wherein I left *Jerusalem,* (2 *Sam.* XV. 30.) and have no Relief from this grievous Oppression of the Enemy?

Ver. 10. *As with a Sword in my Bones, mine Enemies reproach me: while they say daily unto me, Where is thy* GOD?] O how cutting are their Reproaches! how deeply do they wound my Soul! It is like a Stab to the very Heart, to hear them say in their daily Jeers, what is become of thy GOD in whom thou trustedst? why doth he make no more Haste to send thee Deliverance?

Ver. 11. *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in* GOD, *for I shall yet praise him,* who *is the Health of my Countenance, and my* GOD.] But it better becomes me to expostulate with my self, than with thy Majesty. And therefore I ask my self again; O my Soul, why art thou thus sadly afflicted? why do these Things so miserably torment thee, and disturb thy Quiet? Since there is Hope in GOD, that I am not utterly banished from his Presence; but shall return to his House again to praise him. On whom I fix my Eyes as my only Saviour, (for hitherto he hath been my most gracious GOD) who will pull off my Mourning Apparel; and make Joy and Gladness take Place of Sorrow and Sadness in my Countenance.

PSALM XLIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, in all Probability, was composed by the same Author with the former; (and accordingly the LXX. expresly ascribe it to David) *and upon the same Occasion, when he was driven by* Absalom (*who drew the whole Kingdom into his Conspiracy,* 2 Sam. *XV.* 10, 13, *&c.*) *from the House of* GOD, *which he loved more than his own Palace. Thither therefore he desires to be restored, and expresses his Hope of it, in the very same Words, that he did in the Psalm foregoing.*

Ver. 1. *JUdge me, O* GOD, *and plead my Cause against an ungodly Nation; O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust Man.*] O GOD, the supream Judge of the whole World, I appeal to thee, in this Contest between me and a seditious People; who, void of Piety and Humanity, are risen up in Rebellion against me: beseeching thee to vindicate my Innocence, and defend me from their Violence. O deliver me from that deceitful Man, who pretended Devotion, when he went to make an Insurrection; (2 *Sam.* XV. 7, 10.) deliver me from the crafty Counsel which *Ahitophel* gives him; and from the open Force, whereby he seeks injuriously to take away my Life, *ib.* XVII. 1, 2.

Ver. 2. *For thou art the* GOD *of my Strength, why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning, because of the Oppression of the Enemy?*] For I have none to flee unto for Safety and Protection, but thee alone; who hast ever hitherto been my mighty Deliverer, and art now my only Support: And therefore I hope thou wilt make Haste to help me; because it puts me into the forest Agonies, to see my self for the present so deserted by thee, that I can do nothing but bewail the forlorn Condition, and the miserable Straits, into which the Enemy hath reduced me. (See *Psal.* XLII. 9.)

Ver. 3. *O send out thy Light and thy Truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy Hill, and to thy Tabernacles.*] I am beset with mighty Armies, and have nothing to oppose to them, but thy Favour and thy Faithfulness: O send forth the blessed Effects of them, and, according to thy Promises to those that depend on thee, let thy Almighty Power, in much Mercy, lead and conduct me: Let it go along with me, and give me the Victory over them; and bring me back again unto thy holy Mountain, where thou hast fixed thy Dwelling-place.

Ver. 4. *Then will I go unto the Altar of* GOD, *unto* GOD *my exceeding Joy: yea, upon the Harp will I praise thee, O* GOD, *my* GOD.] Then will I faithfully perform my Promises unto thee; and the first Thing I do, shall be, to go to thy Altar with Sacrifices of Thanksgiving to thee the Author of my Joy and Triumph: which shall not cease with that publick Service; but when I am alone, entertaining my self with my Harp, I will praise thy Mercy, and Faithfulness, and Power, O GOD, my righteous Judge; who graciously pro-

protectest the innocent, and defendest those that cannot right themselves.

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in* God, *for I shall yet praise him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my* God.] I doubt not of it; and therefore be no longer dejected, O my Soul: Why shouldst thou give thy self any farther Disquiet, and trouble thy self with tumultuous Thoughts? Hope in God to see better Days; and believe the Enemy hath not so blockt up the Way to his Tabernacle, but God will open it again, and give me Liberty to go and sing Praises there unto him; from whom alone as I expect Deliverance, so he (who hath always been my most gracious God) will turn my Mourning into Joy, and let my Countenance be dejected no more.

PSALM XLIV.

To the Chief Musician, for the Sons of *Korah*. *Maschil*.

ARGUMENT.

This is the third *of those Psalms called* Maschil, *(see Psal. XXXII.) and the* second *of those directed to the Sons of* Korah, *(see Psal. XLII.) but doth not seem to have been composed by* David, *as the two foregoing were: For in his Days they were not oppressed by foreign Enemies, as the Psalmist here complains, in the Name of the whole Church, they were to such a degree, that some of them were made Slaves, others killed, and all of them became a Reproach. Yet I do not think it was composed in the Captivity of* Babylon, *(much less in the Persecution by* Antiochus, *as* Theodoret *thinks, when these Inspirations were ceased) but before that Time, though long after* David's *Days, while their Kingdom was as yet standing, and they had some Forces remaining, tho'* God *did not bless them with Success, v. 9.*

And if we will fix upon any particular Time, and not content our selves to know in general, that it was penned when the whole Nation was in great Distress, I can find none so likely as the Days of Hezekiah; *who was a pious Reformer of that Church, and had restored the Divine Service, according to the Law of* Moses, *and the Ordinances of* David, (2 Chron. *XXIX.* 3, 4, 12, 25.) *and taken Care the Priests and Levites should not only do their Duty, but have their Tythes paid them punctually, &c.* (2 Chron. *XXX. XXXI.*) *and yet notwithstanding was invaded by the King of* Assyria. *Who did not merely make some Inroads upon them, and carry away a great many People, (as had been done before his Time,* 2 Chron. *XXIX.* 9.) *but took all the fenced Cities, and came before* Jerusalem *with a great Army,* 2 Kings *XVIII.* 13, 17. Isa. *XXXVI.* 1. *In this strait, that good King (or some other Divine Person,* 2 Chron. *XXIX.* 25.) *indited this Psalm; wherein he remembers what* God *had done for their Ancestors; and considering he was still their King, thought they might have hoped for the like Victories, of which they could not but still boast and glory. But alas! it fell out quite contrary; for when they expected his Help, he delivered them up into their Enemies Hands, and that when they were the true Worshippers of him, and for his Sake were slain all the Day long. The Consideration of which, he hoped, would move* God *at length to take Compassion upon them, and arise for their Deliverance.*

This is the best Account I can give of this Psalm, which I shall follow in my Paraphrase. And we need not scruple to think there were Psalmodists *in* Hezekiah's *Days; for after that, we find this Gift remained with the Prophets. For instance, it is visible in* Habbakkuk; *who composed a Prayer after the manner of* David's *Psalms, as we read in the last Chapter of his Prophecy: Where there are several Words, which are to be met with at no where but in the Book of Psalms; such as* Sigionoth, Selah, *and* Neginoth.

Ver. 1. *WE have heard with our Ears, O* God, *our Fathers have told us, what Work thou didst in their Days, in the Times of old.*] We have been certainly informed, O Lord, by our Fathers, and we believe what they have told us, not only concerning the wonderful Works thou didst in their Times, but in the Ages long before them; as our Ancestors that lived in those Days have recorded.

Ver. 2. *How thou didst drive out the Heathen with thy Hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the People, and cast them out.*] How thou didst by thy Power expel the *Seven* Nations out of the Land of *Canaan*, and settle in their stead thy People *Israel*, whom thou didst transplant thither from among the *Egyptians*; upon whom thou inflictedst the sorest Plagues, till they were forced themselves to thrust them out, *Exod.* VI. 1. XII. 33.

Ver. 3. *For they got not the Land in Possession by their own Sword, neither did their own Arm save them; but thy right Hand, and thine Arm, and the Light of thy Countenance, because thou hadst a Favour unto them.*] This is to be ascribed to thee alone, and not to their Strength and Valour: Such a speedy Conquest was not gained by the Force of Arms, but by thy mighty Power and glorious Presence; which thou wert pleased to afford them, not because they had obliged thee by their meritorious Services, (for they were a murmuring and refractory People) but merely out of thy Love and good Will towards them.

Ver. 4. *Thou art my King, O* God, *command Deliverances for Jacob.*] And thou, O God, who didst such astonishing Things for them, art still the very same Almighty Being; whom I honour as my Sovereign, my Governour, and Protector; and humbly beseech thee that thou wilt now in this sore Distress vouchsafe to deliver (for alas! it is not in my Power, though thou canst as easily as speak a Word, deliver) the Posterity of those, for whom thou hadst so great a Favour.

Ver. 5. *Through thee will we push down our Enemies; through thy Name will we tread them under that rise up against us.*] If thou wouldst but appear for us, the most powerful Enemies

Heath

ſhould not be able to ſtand before us: But (as thy Servant *Moſes* foretold, *Deut.* XXXIII. 17. O fulfil that gracious Promiſe) we ſhould overthrow and trample under foot all that oppoſe us.

Ver. 6. *For I will not truſt in my Bow, neither ſhall my Sword ſave me.*] It is thou alone muſt do it, as thou didſt for our Forefathers, when thou broughteſt them into *Canaan*: For I have not the leaſt Confidence (as they ſlander me, 2 *Kings* XVIII. 20.) in my Arms; no Hope to be delivered from this dreadful Invaſion by any Forces that I can raiſe.

Ver. 7. *But thou haſt ſaved us from our Enemies, and haſt put them to Shame that hated us.*] But by thee, O LORD, of whoſe Goodneſs we our ſelves, as well as thoſe before us, have had Experience; for thou haſt often reſcued us from our Enemies, and ſhamefully diſappointed thoſe, whoſe Hatred armed them againſt us.

Ver. 8. *In* GOD *we boaſt all the Day long: and praiſe thy Name for ever. Selah.*] In this we glory, and make our Boaſt continually, that we have ſuch a King, ſuch a mighty Saviour and Deliverer, who hath wrought wonderful Things for us and for our Forefathers: This is our only Comfort and Security, which gives us Hope that we ſhall praiſe thee for relieving us in this Diſtreſs, and that all Poſterity ſhall praiſe thy Power and Goodneſs.

Ver. 9. *But thou haſt caſt off, and put us to Shame: and goeſt not forth with our Armies.*] But for the preſent thou art ſo far from being our Defender, that thou haſt expoſed us to the Will of our Enemies: the Shame which was wont to fall on them, (*v.* 7.) is now our Portion; and thou haſt withdrawn that gracious Preſence, (*v.* 3.) wherewith thou waſt wont to conduct and accompany our Armies.

Ver. 10. *Thou makeſt us to turn back from the Enemy: and they which hate us ſpoil for themſelves.*] We have loſt the Courage wherewith thou didſt formerly inſpire us, and cannot defend our Cities and Fortreſſes: But inſtead of puſhing down our Enemies, (*v.* 5.) are forced to flee before them, and ſhamefully leave our Camp, to be a Spoil to them that hate us.

Ver. 11. *Thou haſt given us like Sheep* appointed *for Meat: and haſt ſcattered us among the Heathen.*] And ſome of us they kill in the Purſuit, without any Mercy, like Sheep appointed for the Shambles: others they carry Captive, and diſperſe them among ſtrange People, 2 *Chron.* XXIX. 9.

Ver. 12. *Thou ſelleſt thy People for nought, and doſt not encreaſe* thy Wealth *by their Price.*] Where being diſowned by thee, they are become ſo contemptible, that they are ſold as the vileſt Slaves, who are nothing worth: Thou haſt parted with them very eaſily, and their Lords look upon them as unprofitable Wretches; by whoſe Sale they do not enrich themſelves, but only ſeek to be rid of an uſeleſs Burthen.

Ver. 13. *Thou makeſt us a Reproach to our Neighbours, a Scorn and a Deriſion to them that are round about us.*] This hath made us that remain to be ſo cheap in the Eyes of all our Neighbours, who do not only deſpiſe, but reproach and vilifie us; for we are grown ridiculous to them that are round about us, and they make a Scoff of us.

Ver. 14. *Thou makeſt us a by-word among the Heathen: a ſhaking of the Head among the People.*] Thou haſt brought upon us the Curſe pronounced by thy Servant *Moſes*, (*Deut.* XXVIII. 37.) for we are become a By-word among the Heathen; who, when they would expreſs the Wretchedneſs of any Perſon, ſay, he is viler or more miſerable than a *Jew*; and when they ſay nothing, they ſignify, by the ſcornful Motion of their Heads, their Contempt and Deriſion of us.

Ver. 15. *My Confuſion* is *continually before me, and the Shame of my Face hath covered me:*] I cannot open my Eyes, but the Tokens of our Diſgrace preſent themſelves before me; which hath made me ſo aſhamed, that to hide it, I do not willingly ſhew my Face.

Ver. 16. *For the Voice of him that reproacheth and blaſphemeth by reaſon of the Enemy and Avenger.*] For I can hear nothing neither, but reproachful Words againſt us, and blaſphemous Words againſt thee: (2 *Kings* XIX. 3, 23.) from that inſolent Enemy, whoſe very Countenance is full of Diſdain and Scorn, and threatens farther Miſchief to us.

Ver. 17. *All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falſly in thy Covenant.*] This great Heap of Calamities is fallen upon us, and certainly we have deſerved them all: though this Comfort is ſtill remaining, that we are not ſo wicked as to be moved by all this to deſert thee, and violate that Covenant, whereby we are ingaged to worſhip thee alone.

Ver. 18. *Our Heart is not turned back, neither have our Steps declined from thy Way.*] We adhere ſtill to thy Religion, though both it and we be thus vilified and perſecuted: (2 *Kings* XVIII. 22.) we have ſuch an hearty Affection to it, that we have not hitherto proved Apoſtates from it:

Ver. 19. *Though thou haſt ſore broken us in the Place of Dragons, and covered us with the Shadow of Death.*] No, tho' thou haſt ſo ſhattered and broken in pieces all our Forces; that we are in the moſt diſmal, forlorn Condition; little ſhort of utter Deſtruction.

Ver. 20. *If we have forgotten the Name of our* GOD, *or ſtretched out our Hands to a ſtrange God:*] Thou knoweſt the Truth of this: For if there have been ſo much as a Deſign in our Hearts to revolt from thee; or we have made Prayers, when we ſpread out our Hands towards Heaven, unto any other GOD, whoſe Worſhippers we ſaw ſo proſperous;

Ver. 21. *Shall not* GOD *ſearch this out? for he knoweth the Secrets of the Heart.*] How is it poſſible for us to conceal it from thee? or how ſhould we eſcape thy Vengeance for it, who art privy to the moſt ſecret Motions that are in our Souls?

Ver. 22. *Yea, for thy Sake are we killed all the Day long; we are counted as Sheep for the Slaughter.*] And that which thou ſeeſt in ſecret, our Sufferings teſtifie openly to all others: for our Conſtancy to thee expoſes us to continual Slaughters; we prefer a ſhameful Death before proſperous Impiety; and rather than ſacrifice to any other GOD, chuſe to fall our ſelves a Sacrifice to thee.

Ver. 23.

Ver. 23. *Awake, why ſleepeſt thou, O* LORD? *ariſe, caſt us not off for ever.*] And therefore we hope at laſt thou wilt take Notice of our Fidelity; and no longer ſeem to neglect thoſe that have not deſerted thee. Give us leave, O GOD, to beg this of thee moſt earneſtly, and to aſk why thou doſt not ſend Relief to thy afflicted Servants. Make no farther Delay; but, tho' for our Sins we have been expoſed to the cruel Contempt of our Enemies, (v. 9.) own us now at length for thy People: and ſhew that we are not ſuch Abjects as they account us.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore hideſt thou thy Face?* and *forgetteſt our Affliction and our Oppreſſion?*] It is very grievous to us to think that they look upon us as deſerted by thee; which provokes us to expoſtulate with thee, and to demand (in an humble Manner) wherefore is it that thou giveſt us no Countenance? nor expreſſeſt the leaſt Regard to our intolerable Affliction, wherewith we are oppreſſed?

Ver. 25. *For our Soul is bowed down to the Duſt; our Belly cleaveth unto the Earth.*] For the Load of it is ſo great, that it hath ſunk us into the moſt dejected Condition: wherein we lie diſmayed, as Men without Life and Soul, having no Strength at all to help our ſelves.

Ver. 26. *Ariſe for our Help, and redeem us for thy Mercies Sake.*] Therefore do thou appear for our Deliverance, now that we can neither do any Thing for our ſelves, nor deſerve any Thing of thee: Let not thy Goodneſs, which hath been ſo famed, ſuffer together with us; but, for the Sake of that, which we and our Fathers have ſo often experimented, reſcue us from our Miſeries.

PSALM XLV.

To the Chief Muſician upon *Shoſhannim*, for the Sons of *Korah*. *Maſchil*. A Song of Loves.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing Pſalm is not more ſad and mournful, than this (as Theodoret *obſerves) is joyful and comfortable: promiſing the moſt glorious Things to them. The Author of it is not named: But it was delivered, as the former, to the Maſter of Muſick, for the Uſe of* GOD's *Service in the Tabernacle; to be ſung upon* Shoſhannim *(by which we may underſtand all thoſe Inſtruments that had ſix Strings) by the Sons of* Korah, *to the known Tune of* Maſchil, *(ſee Pſ.* XXXII.) *And being a* Song of Loves, *as the Title tells us, (alluding plainly to the Name of* Jedidiah, *given to* Solomon *by* Nathan *the Prophet,* 2 Sam. *XII.* 25.) *moſt Interpreters conclude it was compoſed upon the Occaſion, at leaſt, of* Solomon's *Marriage with* Pharaoh's *Daughter: who, it is moſt probable, was a Proſelyte to the Jewiſh Religion.*

Some few indeed will not allow ſo much as this, that there is any Reſpect to Solomon *at all in this Pſalm; but only to* CHRIST. *And the Truth is, many of the Expreſſions in it are ſo magnificent, that they can but in a very poor and low Senſe be applied to* Solomon *and his Bride: and ſome of them ſcarce at all. Though, on the contrary Side, other Expreſſions ſeem ſo plainly to belong to him, that they can no other Way, but by an Allegory, be applied to our* Saviour. *Therefore, I believe that I ought not wholly to omit all Reſpect to* Solomon *and his Marriage in my* Paraphraſe: *Though principally I ſhall direct the Pſalm to* CHRIST. *It being ſo apparent, that no Chriſtian can deny it, that the Mind of the Prophet, while he was writing ſome Part of this Pſalm, was carried quite beyond King* Solomon; *to the great King, the Lord* CHRIST. *Or at leaſt he was guided to uſe Words ſo high, that they proved too big for* Solomon: *and we muſt ſay, as our* Saviour *doth in another Caſe,* Behold, a greater than Solomon is here. *And ſo the beſt of the Jewiſh Interpreters acknowledge.*

Ver. 1. MY *Heart is inditing a good Matter: I ſpeak of the Things which I have made touching the King: my Tongue is the Pen of a ready Writer.*] My Heart is full of a Feſtival Song, which I have meditated, and am ready to utter in Praiſe of King *Solomon*; who is but a Shadow of that great King which we expect: In Honour of whom chiefly, I will recite what I have compoſed, with ſuch Fluency as ſhall equal the Stile of the moſt skilful Writer.

Ver. 2. *Thou art fairer than the Children of Men: Grace is poured into thy Lips: therefore* GOD *hath bleſſed thee for ever.*] Thou, O King, art lovely above all other Perſons, thy Speech is moſt acceptable and perſwaſive; becauſe the LORD loves thee, (2 *Sam.* XII. 24.) and hath therefore promiſed long Bleſſings to thee; which yet do but faintly repreſent the truly eternal Bleſſings, which he hath beſtowed on that great King, who when he comes it ſhall be ſaid, that he is in Favour with GOD, as well as Man, (*Luke* II. *ult.*) and ſpeaks as never Man ſpake, (*John* VII. 46.) ſo that all wonder at the gracious Words which proceed out of his Mouth, *Luke* IV. 22.

Ver. 3. *Gird thy Sword upon* thy *Thigh, O moſt mighty: with thy Glory and thy Majeſty.*] Put on thy Royal Ornaments, and the Enſigns of thy Power, O moſt mighty Prince; and appear like thy ſelf in ſuch Splendour and Majeſty, as may ſerve for an Emblem of that moſt illuſtrious Power and ſovereign Authority, wherein the Omnipotent LORD of all the World ſhall ſhew himſelf among Men.

Ver. 4. *And in thy Majeſty ride proſperouſly, becauſe of Truth, and Meekneſs,* and *Righteouſneſs: and thy right Hand ſhall teach thee terrible Things.*] And may thy Kingdom ſo proſper every Way, in the planting all Vertue among thy Subjects, and terrifying thy Enemies; that it may prove a lively Type of the happy Government of the Lord CHRIST: whoſe Kingdom ſhall prevail over all, when he goes forth like a great Conquerour, (*Revel.* XIX. 11.) not to enſlave Mens Perſons, or to ſpoil them of their Goods, but to ſettle the true Faith among them, to make them humble and meek, juſt and charitable: And for the Furtherance of this glorious Work, thy mighty Power, O LORD, ſhall in-

inſtruct thee to do miraculous and amazing Things. *Luke* IV. 36. V. 26.

Ver. 5. *Thine Arrows* are *ſharp in the Heart of the King's Enemies*; whereby *the People fall under thee.*] Which ſhall make thy Word pierce, like ſharp Arrows, into the Hearts of all thoſe that oppoſe thy Royal Authority: and make the Nations of the Earth (far more than ſhall obey King *Solomon*, though he ſhould reign over many Kingdoms, 1 *Kings* IV. 21.) humble themſelves, and become ſubject to thee.

Ver. 6. *Thy Throne*, O GOD, is *for ever and ever*; *the Sceptre of thy Kingdom* is *a right Sceptre.*] O great LORD, the GOD of King *Solomon*, and of all thoſe that are called Gods in Heaven or Earth; the Judge of the whole World: How weak and tottering are the Thrones of all other Princes in Compariſon with thine, which ſhall never be ſubverted? It is the Glory of King *Solomon*, that GOD hath promiſed his Kingdom ſhall continue many Ages, 2 *Sam.* VII. 13. But thou ſhalt reign for ever and ever; and of thy Kingdom there ſhall be no End, *Luke* I. 33. Thy Laws are ſo juſt and ſo good, thy Government ſo equal and fit, that they ſhall be ſubject to no Alteration.

Ver. 7. *Thou loveſt Righteouſneſs, and hateſt Wickedneſs: therefore* GOD, *thy* GOD, *hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladneſs above thy Fellows.*] For thou thy ſelf alſo immutably loveſt all Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, (from which other Princes may ſwerve, and ſo bring their Kingdoms to Ruin, 1 *Kings* IX. 4, 5, 6.) and perfectly hateſt all Impiety and Wickedneſs: For which Cauſe, GOD the Father hath highly exalted thee, O GOD, above all others whom he calls his Sons; and conferred on thee ſuch ſuper-eminent Gifts, as make a Joy among thy Subjects, far exceeding that, by whoſe Sound the very Earth was rent; when *Solomon* was anointed King, and preferred above all his Brethren, 1 *Kings* I. 39, 40.

Ver. 8. *All thy Garments* ſmell *of Myrrh, and Aloes*, and *Caſſia*; *out of the Ivory Palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.*] That indeed was a joyful Day; and ſo is this, wherein thou didſt appear with great Gladneſs, in thy wedding Garments, brought out of the ſtately Wardrobes: The Odour of which is ſo fragrant, as if they were made of the richeſt Perfumes among us; and yet nothing ſo grateful as the Knowledge of CHRIST, which ſhall be ſpread as a ſweet Odour in every Place, when he goes to eſpouſe a Church unto himſelf. (2 *Cor.* II. 14, 15, 16.)

Ver. 9. *Kings Daughters* were *among thy honourable Women: upon thy right Hand did ſtand the Queen in Gold of Ophir.*] Thou was moſt honourably attended by many Princely Virgins, the Daughters of Kings, (though far inferiour in their Deſcent to the true Diſciples of CHRIST, who are all born of GOD) and next to thy ſelf was placed the Royal Bride, in a Veſture of the pureſt Gold: as an Image of the Church of CHRIST, which ſhall ſit with him in heavenly Places, *Epheſ.* II. 6. having the Glory of GOD upon her, *Revel.* XXI. 9, 11.

Ver. 10. *Hearken, O Daughter, and conſider, and incline thine Ear*; *forget alſo thine own People, and thy Fathers Houſe.*] O Royal Bride, underſtand and conſider ſeriouſly the Happineſs to which thou art advanced, by being married to ſuch a Prince; and never think more of the Religion of thy Country in which thou waſt born and bred; but become a true Proſelyte, and conſent to the Law of GOD (as we our ſelves and all the World muſt do to CHRIST, when he calls us to incline our Ears to his heavenly Doctrine; and not only renounce all our former Rites, but Father and Mother, and all things elſe that are deareſt to us, for his Sake, *Luke* XIX. 26. *Epheſ.* V. 31, 32.)

Ver. 11. *So ſhall the King greatly deſire thy Beauty: for he* is *thy* LORD, *and worſhip thou him.*] So ſhalt thou be moſt beautiful and amiable in the Eyes of the King thy Husband (as CHRIST by that Means ſhall preſent to himſelf a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, *Epheſ.* V. 27.) who is now become thy LORD: And therefore ſee thou beeſt ſubject unto him (as the Church muſt be to CHRIST; whom GOD will highly exalt, that at his Name every Knee ſhall be bound to bow, and every Tongue confeſs that he is the LORD, *Philip.* II. 9, 10.)

Ver. 12. *And the Daughter of Tyre* ſhall be there *with a Gift*, even *the rich among the People ſhall intreat thy Favour.*] The People of *Tyre*, as rich and as proud as they are, ſhall come with their neighbouring Countries, and bring thee Preſents; the moſt powerful among them ſhall make ſuit unto thee for thy Friendſhip (as the Kings of the Earth ſhall bring their Glory and their Honour into the Church, *Rev.* XXI. 24.)

Ver. 13. *The King's Daughter* is *all glorious within*; *her Cloathing* is *of wrought Gold.*] For King *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, the Wife of our Prince, is no leſs adorned with all excellent Qualities of Mind, than her Body is with rich Attire; wherein ſhe now appears in a ſplendid Manner, (as the Ornaments of thoſe that are born of GOD in the Chriſtian Church, ſhall not be ſo much the outward adorning of wearing of Gold, as the hidden Man of the Heart, which is in the Sight of GOD of great Price, 1 *Pet.* III. 3, 4.)

Ver. 14. *She ſhall be brought unto the King in Raiment of Needle-work: the Virgins her Companions that follow her ſhall be brought unto thee.*] She ſhall be brought home unto the King with magnificent Pomp, in embroider'd Raiment; and the Virgins, her Maids of Honour, that attend upon her, ſhall come along with her, (as the Church, being owned by CHRIST for his Spouſe in a ſolemn Manner, and being pure and holy, *Rev.* XIX. 7, 8. there ſhall be many chaſt Virgins among us, who ſhall make a Part of it, and follow CHRIST whitherſoever he goes, *Rev.* XIV. 1, 4.)

Ver. 15. *With Gladneſs and Rejoicing* ſhall *they* be *brought: they ſhall enter into the King's Palace.*] They ſhall expreſs their inward Gladneſs by all the outward Tokens of Joy, as they go along in that Pomp; and ſo ſhall enter into the Royal Palace (a Figure of the Church, into which Men ſhall enter with far greater Joy, and ſay, *Allelujah*, let us rejoyce and be glad, for the Lord GOD Omnipotent reigneth, *Rev.* XIX. 6, 7. *Acts* II. 46.)

Ver. 16. *Inſtead of thy Fathers ſhall be thy Children, whom thou mayſt make Princes in all the Earth.*]

Earth.] And may this be the happy Fruit of this Marriage, that inſtead of thy Royal Anceſtors in *Egypt*, whom thou haſt forſaken, thou mayſt be the Mother of Children, whom thou mayſt make Rulers in all the Countries which are ſubject to King *Solomon*, 2 *Kings* IV. 21, 24. As inſtead of the Patriarchs, of our Deſcent from whom we are apt to boaſt, ſhall be the XII. Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, ſitting upon Thrones, and judging the XII. Tribes of *Iſrael*, *Matth.* XIX. 28. by whoſe Means the Church ſhall bring forth Children unto CHRIST, whom he ſhall make Kings and Prieſts unto GOD, and they ſhall reign upon the Earth, *Rev.* V. 10.

Ver. 17. *I will make thy Name to be remembred in all Generations: therefore ſhall the People praiſe thee for ever and ever.*] By this very Song I will make thy Name to be mentioned with Honour throughout all Ages, who ſhall learn from hence to give thee thy deſerved Praiſes, as long as the World ſhall laſt; and much more to propagate the Chriſtian Name (propheſied of ſo long before) to the lateſt Poſterity, and celebrate their Worth with perpetual Praiſes, who forſook all to follow CHRIST, and rather choſe to loſe their Life than quit his Service, *Jam.* V. 11*.

* Μακαρίζομεν, *We call them bleſſed*, &c.

PSALM XLVI.

To the Chief Muſician, for the Sons of *Korah*. A Song upon *Alamoth*.

ARGUMENT.

It is not known to what Time this Pſalm belongs, (about which there are ſeveral Conjectures) nor who was the Author of it. I ſhall ſuppoſe it to have been made by David, *or ſome of the Sons of* Korah, *after thoſe great Victories, which he won over ſeveral Nations, mentioned* 2 Sam. *VIII.* 10. *For any one may ſee that it is a pious Triumph in* GOD, *after ſome remarkable Deliverance from very powerful Enemies; and there are none we can find in the hiſtorical Books, to whom it can more probably relate, than to thoſe there recorded. Of which great Victories it was very fit there ſhould be ſome thankful Monument left to Poſterity; whereby they might be encouraged to hope in* GOD, *and not ſuffer themſelves to be diſmayed at the Sight of the moſt numerous Armies, that might be gather'd againſt them, if they adhered faithfully to their Duty. And therefore this Pſalm was delivered to the Maſter of Muſick, to be ſung in the Tabernacle upon* Alamoth; *of which mention is made,* 1 Chron. *XV.* 20. *and is thought to be either ſome Tune then in common Uſe, or ſome Kind of muſical Inſtrument unknown to us; in which young Virgins, as ſome fancy, took a peculiar Delight, and were wont to learn to play upon it; which they make the Reaſon and Original of its Name.*

Ver. 1. GOD *is our Refuge and Strength: a very preſent Help in Trouble.*] GOD is the moſt powerful Protector, in whom we may ſafely confide: He inſpires us with Courage, and gives us Strength to meet our Enemies; we were in great Danger, but found him exceeding ready to ſend us Help, and give us a ſafe Deliverance, when we were ſorely diſtreſſed.

Ver. 2. *Therefore will not we fear, though the Earth be removed, and though the Mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea.*] For which Cauſe we will never hereafter be diſmayed, but ſtedfaſtly hope in GOD in the midſt of the greateſt Tumults and dangerous Commotions: Though we ſhould ſee the moſt dreadful Confuſions, (ſuch as there are in an Earthquake) and all Things tumbled upſide down, as if the Earth and Sea were blended together, we will ſtill immoveably truſt in him.

Ver. 3. Though *the Waters thereof roar*, and *be troubled*, though *the Mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof. Selah.*] Tho' the Times ſhould prove very tempeſtuous, and our Enemies ſhould ſtorm like the troubled Sea; tho' they ſhould threaten utter Deſtruction to us, and ruſh upon us with ſuch a Violence as its raging Waves do (when it is ſwollen to the greateſt Height) againſt the Shore; the mountainous Cliffs ſhall ſooner ſhake, than we be diſturbed.

Ver. 4. *There is a River, the Streams whereof ſhall make glad the City of* GOD: *the holy Place of the Tabernacles of the moſt High.*] Our Hearts ſhall be quiet and ſtill; like the River that runs through our City, from whence the Inhabitants draw, by Trenches, delightful Streams to water their Gardens. The ſmall Forces that guard this Place, which make no more Noiſe than thoſe Waters, (*Iſa.* VIII. 6, 7.) ſhall by the Help of the moſt high GOD, who in a ſpecial Manner dwelleth here, be too hard for the greateſt Armies, which in their Number, and their Boaſts, imitate the Waves of the roaring Sea.

Ver. 5. GOD *is in the midſt of her; ſhe ſhall not be moved: God ſhall help her*, and that *right early.*] Let them not think to prevail againſt him, who, by a ſingular Token of his Preſence, is in the midſt of this City: Other Mountains may be ſhaken, but Mount Sion is immoveable; becauſe GOD, when there is any Danger, will ſend us ſeaſonable and ſpeedy Relief againſt thoſe that invade us.

Ver. 6. *The Heathen raged, the Kingdoms were moved: he uttered his Voice, the Earth melted.*] So we have lately ſeen, that when many Nations combined againſt us, (2 *Sam.* X. 6.) they only ſhewed their Rage and Fury, but could not hurt us; for they were remarkably overthrown by the Power of GOD, who declared himſelf againſt them, and utterly diſcomfitted them; as he did the *Philiſtines*, ſometimes by Thunder and Lightning from Heaven, 1 *Sam.* VII. 10. (See *Pſal.* XVIII. 13, 14.)

Ver. 7. *The* LORD *of Hoſts is with us, the* GOD *of Jacob is our Refuge. Selah.*] Why then ſhould we be afraid, ſince it is apparent the LORD, who commands all the Armies of Heaven as well as Earth, is on our Side? That GOD who preſerved our Forefather *Jacob* in all his Diſtreſſes, and hath made a gracious Covenant with his Poſterity, defend us as in an impregnable Fortreſs, where we need never fear any Danger.

Ver. 8. *Come, behold the Works of the* LORD, *what Deſolations he hath made in the Earth.*] Draw near

near all ye that doubt of it, and conſider ſeriouſly the wonderful Victories, which it had been impoſſible for us to win without the Help of GOD: Mark, I beſeech you, how many Cities we have taken, and what Deſolations we have made by his Aſſiſtance in the Enemies Country, who thought to have laid us waſt, 2 *Sam.* VIII. 1, 2. 1 *Chron.* XVIII. 1.

Ver. 9. *He maketh Wars to ceaſe unto the End of the Earth; he breaketh the Bow, and cutteth the Spear in ſunder, he burneth the Chariot in the Fire.*] It is he that hath given us this Peace which we now enjoy, by diſenabling all the People of *Canaan*, and the neighbouring Nations, to make any Wars upon us: He hath broken their Bows, and cut their Spears in Pieces, and caſt their Chariots, wherein they truſted, into the Fire, 2 *Sam.* VII. 4.

Ver. 10. *Be ſtill, and know that I* am GOD: *I will be exalted among the Heathen, I will be exalted in the Earth.*] Shewing them as plainly by theſe glorious Victories, how vain it is to oppoſe him, as if he had called unto them by a Voice from Heaven, ſaying; Lay down your Arms, and no longer moleſt my People; know that I am the ſupreme Governour of all the World, who have defeated all your Deſigns, and deſtroyed your Forces: And my Power is not confined to one Country, but ſhall be magnified every where as well as here, by confounding all thoſe that will not deſiſt from their hoſtile Oppoſition to my Will and Pleaſure.

Ver. 11. *The* LORD *of Hoſts* is *with us, the* GOD *of Jacob* is *our Refuge. Selah.*] This is our Comfort and Support; in this we continue ſtill to glory, and ſay as we did before; we will not fear the moſt potent Enemies, ſince the LORD, who commands all the Hoſt of Heaven and Earth, is on our ſide: He preſerved our Forefather *Jacob* in all his Diſtreſſes, and made a gracious Covenant with him, to be the GOD of his Poſterity; in him we are ſafe, as in an impregnable Fortreſs, where no Danger can approach us.

PSALM XLVII.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm for the Sons of *Korah*.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm is thought by ſome to have been compoſed by David, *(though his Name be not in the Title) when he tranſlated the Ark (which was the Token of the Divine Preſence with them) either from* Kiriath-jearim, *with the moſt ſolemn Pomp, and all ſorts of Muſick,* 2 Sam. *VI.* 5. *or from the Houſe of* Obed-Edom *unto Mount* Sion, *v.* 14, 15. *Others think it was compoſed by ſome of the Sons of* Korah, *when the Ark was again tranſlated by* Solomon, *with the like rejoicing, (*2 Chron. *V.* 2, 12, 13.*) from Mount* Sion, *to the Houſe which he had built for it upon the neighbouring Mountain. And there may be a* third *Conjecture allowed, that it was made after ſome great Victory which* GOD *had given them over their Enemies; and ſung as they followed the Ark back to its Dwelling Place, from whence it had been carried before them to the Battle. There is no doubt but one or other of theſe Triumphs gave Occaſion to it: And the Ark being a Figure of* CHRIST, *as that Mountain was of the Heavens, the Tranſlation or carrying back of the Ark thither, may be look'd upon as a Figure of* CHRIST's *Aſcenſion (after he had dwelt here a while in a meaner Place, and conquer'd Death) unto the high and holy Place, where he is now at* GOD's *right Hand in the Heavens. And with Relation to this alone, the ancient Fathers expound the Pſalm; which may eaſily be apply'd, in the myſtical Senſe, unto that Buſineſs.*

Ver. 1. *O Clap your Hands, all ye People, ſhout unto* GOD *with the Voice of Triumph:*] O be joyful all ye People, who are now aſſembled at this Feſtival; let your Hearts overflow with Joy, and expreſs how exceeding glad they are, by clapping your Hands, and lifting up your Voices, and ſhouting after a triumphant Manner, in Honour of the great GOD who dwells among us.

Ver. 2. *For the* LORD *moſt High is terrible; he is a great King over all the Earth.*] For his Majeſty is moſt ſublime, his Dominion abſolute, his Power dreadful; being the Sovereign LORD of the whole Word, the King of Kings, and the LORD of Lords.

Ver. 3. *He ſhall ſubdue the People under us, and the Nations under our Feet.*] By whom the People of theſe Countries, though warlike and ſtrong, were anciently ſubdued; and other Nations ſince have been made our Subjects.

Ver. 4. *He ſhall chuſe our Inheritance for us, the Excellency of Jacob, whom he loved. Selah.*] He who is the ſupreme Diſpoſer of all Things, hath of his mere good Will choſen this good Land to be our Inheritance, and therein choſen a Place for his own Dwelling; which is an Honour wherein we excel all other People, and a moſt ſingular Token of his Love towards us.

Ver. 5. GOD *is gone up with a Shout, the* LORD *with the Sound of a Trumpet.*] GOD is gone up, by the ſpecial Token of his Preſence, into that holy Place, with Shouts of Joy and Praiſe: The LORD is gone up in a triumphant Pomp, with the Sound of the Trumpet, and all other Inſtruments of Muſick, 2 *Sam.* VI. 5, 15.

Ver. 6. *Sing Praiſes to* GOD, *ſing Praiſes: ſing Praiſes unto our King, ſing Praiſes.*] Let us never ceaſe to ſing his Praiſes, who hath choſen us to be his People; let it be our conſtant Employment to praiſe our King, who hath ſubdued the Nations to us: O ſing Praiſes to him, ſing Praiſes to him; it cannot be too oft repeated, that he alone is to be praiſed.

Ver. 7. *For* GOD *is the King of all the Earth, ſing ye Praiſes with Underſtanding.*] For our King is the Sovereign of all the Nations upon Earth; ſing ye Praiſes therefore skilfully to his moſt excellent Majeſty: It is your Wiſdom to praiſe him in the beſt Manner you are able, who alone is wiſe enough to govern all the World.

Ver. 8. GOD *reigneth over the Heathen: God ſitteth upon the Throne of his Holineſs.*] He hath made thoſe Heathens who dwelt in Sion to feel his Power, and ſubmit themſelves unto him, (2 *Sam.* V. 7.) And there he hath ſeated himſelf upon the Ark of his Preſence, as on his holy Throne.

Ver.

Ver. 9. *The Princes of the People are gathered together*, even *the People of the* GOD *of Abraham: for the Shields of the Earth* belong *unto* GOD; *he is greatly exalted.*] Before which the Heads of the Tribes, with all the People that worſhip him, who promiſed to give this Countrey unto *Abraham*, are aſſembled together at their ſolemn Feaſts; without any Fear of Invaſion from their foreign Neighbours: For GOD (when to attend his Service, they have left their own Houſes unguarded) hath undertaken their Protection, (*Exod.* XXXIV. 23, 25.) and he is infinitely Superiour to all other Gods, which pretend to be the Defenders of the Earth.

PSALM XLVIII.

A Song and Pſalm, for the Sons of *Korah.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm ſeems to have been compoſed after the Repulſe of ſome Army which invaded them, and intended to have deſtroyed Jeruſalem. *If all things elſe would agree, it might not unfitly be applied to the defeating of* Sennacherib, *the King of* Aſſyria's *Army, which actually begirt that City; but by a ſudden Peſtilence, which in one Night killed a vaſt Number, was forced to quit the Siege, and retreat with Shame,* 2 Kings *XVIII.* 19. *But the fourth Verſe of this Pſalm ſpeaks of a Combination of Kings, who had joined their Forces together upon this Deſign: Which makes it moſt applicable, in my Judgment, to that Hiſtory in* 2 Chron. *XX. where we read* (v. 1, 2, 10.) *that* Moab, *and* Ammon, *and they of Mount* Seir, *came againſt* Jehoſaphat, *with an intention, I ſuppoſe, to fall upon* Jeruſalem. *And tho'* Jehoſaphat *went out to oppoſe them, yet he acknowledges,* (v. 12.) *their Multitude was ſo great, that he had no Power to reſiſt them: but they might do what they pleaſed with him. For he knew not which way to turn himſelf, but only depended upon* GOD: *who in a marvellous manner diſperſed them, as he told* Jehoſaphat *he would do, without their ſtriking one Stroke againſt them. For which gracious Meſſage, ſent him by a Prophet,* v. 14. *the* Levites, *and among others thoſe deſcended from* Korah, *immediately praiſed the* LORD *beforehand,* v. 19. *and after the Victory gave ſolemn Thanks, before they left the Field, in the* Valley of Bleſſing; *v.* 26. *And then returned to* Jeruſalem *with* Pſalters, and Harps, and Trumpets, unto the Houſe of the LORD, *v.* 28. *At which time, it is probable, this Pſalm was ſung, and called, a* Song and Pſalm; *that is, a Pſalm of Triumph, or of great Joy; compoſed perhaps by ſome of the Sons of* Korah.

But of a Song and Pſalm, *ſee* Pſalm *LXVII.*

Ver. 1. GReat is *the* LORD, *and greatly to be praiſed in the City of our* GOD, *in the Mountain of his Holineſs.*] Great is the Majeſty and the Power of the LORD; who is therefore to be celebrated with the higheſt Praiſes: And no where ſo much as in his own City, by the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, in that Mountain which he hath long ago ſet apart for the Place of his Worſhip; and hath now ſo marvellouſly defended.

Ver. 2. *Beautiful for Situation, the Joy of the whole Earth* is *Mount Zion*, on *the Sides of the North, the City of the great King.*] And a beautiful Place it is, which he hath choſen for his Habitation, the very Situation of Mount *Sion* being moſt delightful, the pleaſanteſt in all the Countrey: for it lies on the North Side of *Jeruſalem*, the City of the great King, the LORD of Heaven and Earth.

Ver. 3. GOD *is known in her Palaces for a Refuge;*] Who is the principal Glory of that Place, as that is of the Countrey: For Mount *Sion* is not ſo beautiful for its Situation, as for his Divine Preſence in that magnificent Palace, which is built for him there; and makes that City an impregnable Fortreſs.

Ver. 4. *For lo, the Kings were aſſembled, they paſſed by together.*] For, behold a freſh Inſtance of it; the Kings of ſeveral neighbouring Countries entered into Confederacy to caſt us out of our Poſſeſſion; (2 *Chron.* XX. 11.) and made a great Progreſs in their Deſign; marching together from beyond the Dead Sea, (*v.* 2.) till they came nigh to *Jeruſalem*, (*v.* 16, 20, 24.)

Ver. 5. *They ſaw it*, and *ſo they marvelled, they were troubled*, and *haſted away.*] But then, they only had a Sight of it, and that was all: for a ſudden Amazement ſeized on them, and ſuch a pannick Fear, that they fell into Confuſion; and, taking one another for Enemies, were deſtroyed by the Ambuſh, which one Nation laid for the other. (*ib.* v. 22.)

Ver. 6. *Fear took Hold upon them there*, and *Pain as of a Woman in Travail.*] There was nothing but Terror and Trembling to be ſeen throughout all the Hoſt: which ſurprized them ſo ſuddenly, and caſt them into ſo great Anguiſh, that it may be compared to the haſty and violent Pangs of a Travailing Woman.

Ver. 7. *Thou breakeſt the Ships of Tarſhiſh with an Eaſt Wind.*] Or to the Conſternation and Confuſion which the Mariners are in, when a Fleet of Ships richly laden from *Tarſhiſh* is broken in pieces, by the furious Blaſts of the Eaſt Wind, one againſt another †.

† *As a Fleet of* Jehoſaphat's *was ſhortly after.* (2 Chron. XX. 37.)

Ver. 8. *As we have heard, ſo have we ſeen, in the City of the* LORD *of Hoſts, in the City of our* GOD, GOD *will eſtabliſh it for ever. Selah.*] We have heard of ſuch Things heretofore; which our Fathers have reported to us; but now our Eyes ſee the wonderful Works of GOD: who told us by his Prophet, that he would ſave us from this great Army which invaded us. (2 *Chron.* XX. 14, 15, *&c.*) And we have ſeen his Word verified in this City; from whence GOD, whoſe City it is, and who is the LORD of all the Hoſt of Heaven and Earth, ſent inviſible Powers to terrifie and diſperſe them, (*v.* 22.) and will, we hope, defend and protect it from being ſubverted by the Aſſaults of our Enemies in future Ages.

Ver. 9. *We have thought of thy Loving-kindneſs, O* GOD, *in the midſt of thy Temple.*] O GOD, we had no Confidence in our Fortifications, or in our Army; but we aſſembled our ſelves together in thy Temple, to ask Help of thee, (2

Chron. XX. 3, 4, 5.) and meditating on thy wonted Mercy to those that seek thee, we quietly expected what thy Loving-kindness would do for us.

Ver. 10. *According to thy Name, O* God, *so is thy Praise unto the Ends of the Earth: thy right Hand is full of Righteousness.*] And as thou art called, O God, by the Name of the Lord of Hosts, so thou hast demonstrated thy self, in the glorious Victory thou hast given us. (*ib.* v. 15.) For which not we alone praise thee, but the most distant People, who hear the Fame of it, shall acknowledge and magnifie thy Power, (*v.* 29.) which thou hast abundantly declared in the just Destruction of our Enemies, and the gracious Protection of us thy faithful Servants.

Ver. 11. *Let Mount Zion rejoyce, let the Daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy Judgments.*] Let the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* then, which is the Mother City, give an Example of Joy and Thankfulness to all the rest of the Cities and Towns of *Judah*: and let them unanimously join together with the greatest Gladness, to express how sensible they are of thy Power and Goodness, in this wonderful Deliverance.

Ver. 12. *Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the Towers thereof.*] Make a solemn Procession, and go round about the City, blessing and praising God with thankful Hearts; who hath preserved you from being begirt by the Enemy: Tell all the Towers as you go along, and see if there be so much as one wanting; or the least Hurt done to any of them.

Ver. 13. *Mark ye well her Bulwarks, consider her Palaces; that ye may tell it to the Generation following.*] Observe the Out-works, and attentively consider them; take a distinct Survey of all the sumptuous Buildings also; and mark how intire they are, and untouch'd by the Enemies Batteries; that you may keep a Record of it, and preserve the Memory of so great a Wonder, for the Benefit of succeeding Generations.

Ver. 14. *For this* God *is our* God *for ever and ever; he will be our Guide* even *unto Death.*] For this is the God who alone can protect us, and will be our Defender, if we depend upon him, for ever and ever: He will not content himself with having preserved us once; but be our Conducter, and exercise a most tender Providence over us, as a Shepherd doth over his Sheep, all the Days of our Life.

PSALM XLIX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of *Korah.*

ARGUMENT.

The Author of this Psalm is not known; nor can we find whether there was any particular Occasion of it. But whosoever composed it, (whether some of the Sons of Korah, *or any other) it is likely that he had in his Eye the unreasonable Thirst of Mankind after Riches, and their Insolence and Haughtiness when they have acquired them; which it is possible was a great Discouragement to some pious but poor People in those Times; And therefore after the Example of* David, (Psalm *XXXVII, XXXIX.*) *he indited this Psalm, to check that Vanity; by setting Death before their Eyes. The serious Meditation of which, he knew, would both pull down the Plumes of the Proud and Scornful; and preserve those upon whom they trampled, from being dejected at their prosperous Impiety.*

Ver. 1. *Hear this, all ye People, give Ear, all ye Inhabitants of the World:*] Listen to me, all ye People, in what part of the World soever you dwell; for that which I am going to deliver is of such common Concernment, that it belongs to all Countries, as much as any one upon the Face of the Earth.

Ver. 2. *Both low and high, rich and poor together.*] Whether you be Men of obscure Birth, and meaner Rank, or Persons nobly descended, and in great Authority; whether you abound in Wealth, or are of a poor Estate, you are all alike concerned to attend to my Instruction.

Ver. 3. *My Mouth shall speak of Wisdom: and the Meditation of my Heart* shall be *of Understanding.*] Which is neither about trivial Things, nor slightly considered; but about the most weighty Matters, which my Mind hath deeply pondered: I will inrich your Souls with Wisdom, which is better than all the worldly Wealth you covet; and teach you how to direct all your Actions aright, unto that Scope at which you aim, of being happy.

Ver. 4. *I will incline mine Ear to a Parable; I will open my dark Saying upon the Harp.*] It is not vulgar Instruction, but most excellent Advice, which I have to give you; more to be desired than the Skill of resolving the darkest Riddles: to which I my self will diligently attend, while it is Sung, as I play upon my Harp.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the Days of Evil,* when *the Iniquity of my Heels shall compass me about?* I intend not to neglect the Counsel I give to others; and therefore shall ask my self the Question I mean to answer: What Cause is there that I should be troubled with Fears and Cares, and Anxiety of Mind, in calamitous Times, when the Iniquity of those that endeavour to supplant me, hath surrounded me on all Sides, and left me no way to escape them?

Ver. 6. *They that trust in their Wealth, and boast themselves in the Multitude of their Riches:*] They are confident their Strength and Power is such, that none can resist them, and the high Conceit they have of their vast Treasures makes them so proud, that they insult over others, and brag what they can do to ruin them.

Ver. 7. *None* of them *can by any means redeem* his *Brother, nor give to* God *a Ransom for him:*] Alas! poor Men, their Weakness is apparent; there is not a Man among them, that by all the Power he hath, can find a Means to save the dearest Friend alive, when God calls for him: He alone can dispose of Mens Lives; and the richest of them hath not Wealth enough to purchase a Reprieve, when he pronounces the Sentence of Death upon them.

Ver. 8. (*For the Redemption of their Soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.*)] That's a Business too difficult and costly for him, to redeem the Life of a Man; or to respite for a Time, his Departure, whose Soul is leaving his Body: He must

must let that alone; for as long as the World lasts, it will be a vain Endeavour.

Ver. 9. *That he should still live for ever, and not see Corruption.*] Let him attempt it, if he please, upon himself: Can he prolong his own Life from time to time, so that it shall be perpetuated, and never dissolved?

Ver. 10. *For he seeth that wise Men die, likewise the Fool and the brutish Person perish, and leave their Wealth to others.*] No such matter; the Wisdom I speak of, (*v.* 3.) promises no Exemption to the best of Men, but they must die as well as others: And therefore those wicked Sots, whose Life differs little from that of Beasts, may justly expect not merely to die, but to be destroyed, and cut off like the Beasts that perish. And then, what becomes of all their Wealth, which they are forced to leave to others; perhaps to Strangers?

Ver. 11. *Their inward Thought* is, that *their Houses* shall continue *for ever*, and *their Dwelling-Places to all Generations; they call* their *Lands after their own Names.*] They imagined indeed, and secretly pleased themselves in this Fancy, that when they could stay no longer in the World, their goodly Houses, which they had built, should stand for ever, and the Places of their Abode continue in their Family from Age to Age: though they could not be immortal themselves, yet they hoped their Names, which they imposed upon their Lands, should never die.

Ver. 12. *Nevertheless, Man* being *in Honour, abideth not: he is like the Beasts* that *perish.*] But alas! the Thoughts of Man are vain: For whatsoever Esteem or Reputation one of these Worldlings gets here, it lasts not at all, but dies together with him; he is in this also like to his Fellow-Beasts, whom, when they are dead, no body remembers.

Ver. 13. *This their Way* is *their Folly; yet their Posterity approve their Sayings. Selah.*] Thus their Life concludes, as it was spent, in Folly, (for they have no Security that the Names they impose on their Lands shall last; or if they do, that Men shall think of them; or if they should, what are they the better for it?) and yet, so close doth this Folly stick to Mankind, that they that succeed in their Possessions, make no Benefit of this Observation, but are as very Fools as themselves, and tread in the Steps of those that went before them.

Ver. 14. *Like Sheep that are laid in the Grave, Death shall feed on them; and the Upright shall have Dominion over them in the Morning, and their Beauty shall consume in the Grave, from their Dwelling.*] They go in Droves to their Graves, when Death seizes on them; thither it drives them in the Close of their Days, just as the Shepherd doth his Sheep to the Fold in the Evening: And then the Just, over whom they insulted, shall quickly trample upon, and triumph over them, (as they shall do much more when they awake out of the Dust at the Resurrection:) All their Power and Splendor wherein they formerly appeared, tho' it seem as firm as a Rock, shall moulder away; for the Grave is its utmost Bound, beyond which it cannot go.

Ver. 15. *But God will redeem my Soul from the Power of the Grave; for he shall receive me. Selah.*] And doubtless God will rescue me from that imminent Danger, wherein I am, (*v.* 5.) of being destroyed, and not let me descend into the Grave, but live to have Dominion over them; for he hath graciously received me into his Favour, (so that if I die, I shall still have this Comfort remaining, that he will one Day raise me out of my Grave again.)

Ver. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich; when the Glory of his House is increased.*] Be not thou then troubled, nor dismayed, (no more than I, *v.* 5.) whosoever thou art that hearest or readest this, when thou seest a worldly Man grow very rich, and great Honours heaped on his Family; which enables and emboldens him perhaps to use the meaner sort contemptuously:

Ver. 17. *For when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away: his Glory shall not descend after him.*] For he can by no means, as I told thee, purchase the Privilege of living one Moment longer than God pleases; and when he dies, he is no greater than other Men: for he can carry none of his Wealth along with him; nor shall he that was so terrible here, be at all regarded in the other World.

Ver. 18. *Though whiles he lived, he blessed his Soul: and Men will praise thee when thou dost well to thy self.*] For all his Happiness ends with this Life (why shouldst thou then be troubled at his Prosperity?) which he spends in Luxury and Riot, Pride and Vanity, applauding himself in his Riches, and in his Pleasures, and having a Company of Flatterers about him; who will commend thee to, if thou wilt imitate him in indulging thine own Appetite, and denying nothing to thy self and Companions, but doing no good to any body else.

Ver. 19. *He shall go to the Generation of his Fathers, they shall never see Light.*] And he arrives (perhaps) at the Age of his Forefathers, whose Steps he follows; but after that shall all be alike miserable, and never more partake of the least Joy or Consolation.

Ver. 20. *Man* that is *in Honour, and understandeth not, is like the Beasts* that *perish.*] So true it is which was said before, (and so little Cause there is to envy such Mens Greatness) that a Man raised to great Dignity in this World, and never considers how short his Honour is, (*v.* 15.) behaves himself like a Brute while he lives, and, thinking of no such Thing, is cut off like a Brute, whom no body regards when he is dead.

PSALM L.

A Psalm of *Asaph.*

ARGUMENT.

The Author of this Psalm, the Title tells us, (as we translate it) was Asaph, *who composed several Songs, as well as* David, *for the Use of the Tabernacle, as we read in the* 2 Chron. *XXIX.* 30. *But whether he was* Asaph *the* Levite, *who lived in the same Age with* David, *or some other Prophet in after Times, cannot be certainly resolved. It seems to me that it was not the former; because he is never, that I remember, called* Asaph *the* Seer, *as the other is; whose Psalms* Hezekiah *caused to be sung together*

ther with thoſe of King David. *And therefore I judge it moſt likely that he lived in after-Times, in the Reign of ſome pious Prince, ſuch as* Jehoſaphat; *or, which is moſt probable, in the Days of* Hezekiah *himſelf; (ſee Pſal. XLIV.) who, though he had reformed the Worſhip of* God, *yet could not amend Mens Minds; but there ſtill remained, this Prophet obſerved, Abundance of Hypocriſy among them: Both among the People, who placed all Religion in Sacrifices, and other external Rites and Ceremonies; and among the Doctors of the Law, and the Judges, who taught the People their Duty, but obſerved none of thoſe Precepts themſelves which they expounded to others.*]

Both theſe this Holy Man awakens by this Pſalm, to a Conſideration of the Danger they were in; repreſenting God *as the Supream Judge of the World, coming in an amazing manner to call them all to a ſtrict Account, and to take a ſevere Vengeance on them, unleſs they amended. Which began to come upon them by* Sennacherib; *whom* God *threatned to ſend* againſt the Hypocritical Nation, *Iſa. X. 6. And calls that time,* the Day of his Viſitation, *v. 3. when* Sennacherib *over-ran all the Country (as* Iſaiah *prophefied VIII. 7, 8.) till he came to* Jeruſalem. *Upon which City* Nebuchadnezzar *compleatly executed the Judgment here threatned, when he deſtroyed* Jeruſalem *and the Temple it ſelf; unto which it was to no purpoſe to bring a Multitude of Sacrifices, while they continued the evil of their Doings,* Iſa. *I.* 13, 16.

In both which Days of Viſitation, firſt by the King of Aſſyria, *and then by the King of* Babylon, *the Pſalmiſt here repreſents the Divine Majeſty, after the manner of Men, like to a King coming out of his Palace, attended by his Miniſters, with the Enſigns of Terror carried before him; and iſſuing out his Orders to ſummon all his Subjects, to appear at his Tribunal, and hear their Accuſation read, with the Sentence he would pronounce upon them.*

Ver. 1. [*THE mighty* God, even *the* Lord *hath ſpoken, and called the Earth from the riſing of the Sun, unto the going down thereof.*] The Omnipotent Majeſty, the Supreme Judge of Heaven and Earth, to whom the greateſt Kings and Potentates are but Subjects; the Eternal Lord, who changes not, hath given out his Orders, that all the People of the Land, from Eaſt to Weſt, be ſummoned to appear before him.

Ver. 2. *Out of Sion, the Perfection of Beauty,* God *hath ſhined.*] He will go forth in the greateſt Splendor, out of his magnificent Palace, where he dwells in *Sion*; and let you ſee how much his incomparable Excellencies and Perfections are to be reverenced.

Ver. 3. *Our* God *ſhall come, and ſhall not keep Silence: a Fire ſhall devour before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous round about him.*] Our God will undoubtedly come and reckon with you, tho' now he ſeem to take no Notice of your Impiety: And he will not come like Earthly Princes, before whom there marches an armed Multitude, but in a far more terrible and irreſiſtible manner; which ſhall make you as ſenſible of his dreadful Preſence, as your Anceſtors were at Mount *Sinai*, when the devouring Flames, and Thunder, and Lightning, which attended on him, made the very Mountain quake and tremble. (*Exod.* XIX. 16, 18. *Iſa.* IX. 18, 19.)

Ver. 4. *He ſhall call to the Heavens from above, and to the Earth, that he may judge his People.*] He ſhall call Heaven and Earth to be Witneſſes of the Equity of his Proceedings; (*Iſa.* I. 2.) and you may as ſoon move them out of their Place, as avoid appearing before his Tribunal.

Ver. 5. *Gather my Saints together unto me: thoſe that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.*] He will ſend out his Officers, with a peremptory Charge, ſaying, Bring thoſe Men before me, whom I have oblig'd above all other People, and ſeparated to my ſelf to be a holy Nation, (*Deut.* XIV. 2.) and who have engaged themſelves to me in ſuch a ſolemn Covenant, confirmed by the Blood of Sacrifices, that they wiſh they might periſh, in like manner, if they did not obſerve it, (*Jer.* XXXIV. 18, 19.)

Ver 6. *And the Heavens ſhall declare his Righteouſneſs: for* God *is Judge himſelf. Selah.*] (They ſhall have a fair Trial, whether they have ſo done or no: For the Juſtice of his Judgment ſhall be as conſpicuous as the Heavens; becauſe God himſelf, who cannot do unrighteouſly, will examine the Cauſe, and pronounce the Sentence.)

Ver. 7. *Hear, O my People, and I will ſpeak; O Iſrael, and I will teſtify againſt thee: I* am God, even *thy* God.] Imagine then, that all Things being thus prepared, you hear him calling to you, ſaying, Hearken, O my People, for I have ſomething to ſay to thee; O Iſrael, my beloved People, hearken; for I muſt admoniſh and convince thee of the Breach of thoſe Laws, which I, the ſupreme Lawgiver, and thy moſt gracious God, have given to thee, (*Exod.* XX. 2.)

Ver. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, or thy Burnt-Offerings,* to have been *continually before me.*] I do not mean thoſe concerning Sacrifices; I have no Complaint to make about that matter: Thy Burnt-Offerings, I acknowledge, never fail to be brought both Morning and Evening to my Altar; and I ſee how buſy thou art in that Employment:

Ver. 9. *I will take no Bullock out of thy Houſe,* nor *He-goats out of thy Folds.*] But is this all that I require of thee? Do not miſtake thy ſelf, nor think that I will be content all the reſt of my Laws ſhould be broken, if you do but multiply Sacrifices, of which I have no need; or, if I had, need not be beholden unto thee, for the very beſt of them.

Ver. 10. *For every Beaſt of the Foreſt* is *mine,* and *the Cattel upon a thouſand Hills.*] For I could be ſupplied out of my own Folds and Herds, which thou haſt nothing to do withal; having all the Beaſts of the Foreſt at my Command, with the Cattel that graze on more Hills than thou haſt ever ſeen.

Ver. 11. *I know all the Fowls of the Mountains; and the wild Beaſts of the Field are mine.*] I know alſo where the Fowls of the Mountains build their Neſts, which thou canſt not reach; and the wild Beaſts in the open Fields, whom thou canſt not incloſe, are all ready at Hand to do me Service.

Ver. 12. *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee,*

thee, for the World is *mine, and the Fulneſs thereof.*] If I were hungry I would not come to acquaint thee with it, that thou mighteſt provide me Food: Why ſhould I be beholden to thy Poverty, when I am ſo rich? For the whole World is mine, and all that it contains.

Ver. 13. *Will I eat the Fleſh of Bulls, or drink the Blood of Goats?*] Canſt thou be ſo abſurd as to imagine that I need Meat or Drink? and for that Reaſon call daily for the Fleſh of Bulls, and the Blood of Goats, to ſatisfy my Hunger, and to quench my Thirſt? Or that my Nature is ſuch, that I can be pleaſed merely with the Smoak of thoſe upon my Altar?

Ver. 14. *Offer unto* GOD *Thankſgiving, and pay thy Vows unto the moſt High.*] They have their Uſe; but if thou wilt bring me acceptable Sacrifices, know that I value, in the *firſt* Place, a truly thankful Heart, which gratefully acknowledges my Benefits, above all the Peace-offerings in the World; and *next*, that I expect thou ſhouldſt faithfully perform all the Vows and Promiſes thou makeſt, when thou beggeſt any Bleſſing of me; and not think to put me off (who am too great to be dallied withal) with Sin-offerings for the Breach of them.

Ver. 15. *And call upon me in the Day of Trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me.*] And *thirdly*, devoutly commend thy ſelf unto me, when thou art in any Trouble, by ardent Prayer; piouſly confiding in me, and thou ſhalt find it more powerful than all Burnt-offerings; for I will certainly deliver thee, that thou mayſt honour me with thy Praiſes, and proclaim my Power and Goodneſs, to invite others unto my Service.

Ver. 16. *But unto the wicked* GOD *ſaith, What haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my Covenant in thy Mouth?*] Not that this is all that I require of thee; for if thou leadeſt a wicked Life, and art injurious to thy Neighbours, what care I for thy Praiſes, or for thy Zeal to boot, in preſſing my Commands upon others, which thou doſt not obſerve thy ſelf? Thou braggeſt thou art a Doctor of the Law, and thou declareſt to the People my Will and Pleaſure, and makeſt often mention of my Covenant, whereby they ſtand bound to be obedient to me; but to what Purpoſe is it? Or with what Face canſt thou do it?

Ver. 17. *Seeing thou hateſt Inſtruction, and caſteſt my Word behind thee.*] Since, by thy Example, thou teacheſt them to contemn all thoſe Inſtructions, to which thou hateſt to be bound thy ſelf; and by thy Actions declareſt thou haſt no Regard at all to any Thing, either that I have bidden *thee* do, or threatned I will do to thoſe that violate my Precepts.

Ver. 18. *When thou ſaweſt a Thief, then thou conſentedſt with him, and haſt been Partaker with Adulterers.*] When thou haſt obſerved a Man thrive by Stealth and Robbery, inſtead of having him puniſhed, thou haſt greedily accepted the Proffer of being a Sharer with him; and, which is worſe, the Adulterers find Favour with thee, and thou art Partaker with them in their Filthineſs.

Ver. 19. *Thou giveſt thy Mouth to evil, and thy Tongue frameth Deceit.*] Thou letteſt thy Tongue looſe to Slanders; and backbiteſt thoſe who are not preſent to anſwer for themſelves: and doſt not ſtick to contrive artificial Lyes and Deceits, to cheat thoſe that have any Dealing with thee.

Ver. 20. *Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy Brother; thou ſlandereſt thine own Mother's Son.*] Nay, when thou ſitteſt in open Court, ſolemnly to judge Men according to the Law, thou makeſt bold to ſpeak falſly (for a Reward;) and that not againſt a Stranger, but thy own Brother: yea, thou wilt not ſpare him that lay in the ſame Womb with thee; but load him with Calumnies and Reproaches.

Ver. 21. *Theſe* things *haſt thou done, and I kept Silence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether* ſuch a one *as thy ſelf: but I will reprove thee, and ſet* them *in order before thine Eyes.*] All this Wickedneſs thou haſt committed, and I have forborn to puniſh thee; but inſtead of amending thy Life, to which my Patience ſhould have invited thee, thou haſt preſumed ſo much upon my Lenity, as to add another Sin to all the reſt; and imagined that I am ignorant of what is done in ſecret, or am altogether as well pleaſed with theſe Things as thy ſelf: and therefore now I have ſharply rebuked thee for them (ſo hateful they are to me) and ſet them all in Order (that thou mayſt ſee nothing can eſcape my Knowledge) diſtinctly before thy Eyes.

Ver. 22. *Now conſider this ye that forget* GOD, *leſt I tear* you *in Pieces, and* there be *none to deliver.*] Let this be a Warning to you, and to all thoſe that abuſe the Patience and Long-ſuffering of GOD; never thinking of his juſt Severity againſt ſuch wicked Doers. Conſider this ſeriouſly, and repent in Time; leſt my Patience be turned into Indignation and Wrath; and I lay hold on you, and ſnatch you away, to ſuffer your deſerved Puniſhment: And none of your Companions, whom you have ſerved in their Sins, ſhall be able to give you any Relief; but all periſh together with you.

Ver. 23. *Whoſo offereth Praiſe, glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his Converſation* aright, *will I ſhew the Salvation of* GOD.] Remember I have told you what Sacrifices I am well pleaſed with; not with thoſe of Beaſts, but with the Sacrifice of Praiſe and hearty Thankſgiving for all my Benefits; which doth me more Honour, than all the lifeleſs Sacrifices of Bulls and Goats: But he that thus devoutly worſhips me, muſt take care withal to diſpoſe his Life into a Conformity with all my Precepts; for this is the Man whom I will make Partaker of the Bleſſings which I have promiſed.

PSALM LI.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David*, when *Nathan* the Prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to *Bathſheba*.

ARGUMENT.

Here now begins a new Collection of ſome Pſalms, whereof David *was the Author: which, I ſuppoſe, were found after the* firſt *Book was publiſhed, and this* ſecond *begun; to the End of which from this Place they continue: as we read expreſly,* Pſal. *LXXII.* ult. *For tho'*

the Author of the two laſt before that, be not mentioned in the Title; yet the very Matter of them, as well as that Concluſion of the Book, aſſures us they were compoſed by David; *who in this* Fifty firſt *Pſalm (as the Title tells us) moſt ſadly bewails the Sin which he had committed with* Bathſheba, *and thoſe that followed it. In which he had alſo continued for ſome Time, till* Nathan *the Prophet came with a Meſſage from* God *to reprove him, and to pronounce a very ſore Judgment againſt him and his Family for his Crimes.*

After this Divine Reprehenſion and Threatning, he was very much humbled, and, to make himſelf as notorious an Example of true Repentance, as he had been of ſoul Wickedneſs, he compoſed this Penitential *Hymn: and ſent it to the Maſter of the Muſick in the Tabernacle, to be uſed perpetually there; as a Teſtimony of his unfeigned Sorrow for what he had done, and of the miſerable Condition he thought himſelf in, without the infinite Mercy of* God *to him. Which he begs with the greateſt Earneſtneſs, together with the Aſſiſtances of his Grace; which he promiſes to imploy for the reducing other Sinners, beſeeching him withal to be favourable to his People, eſpecially to the City of* Jeruſalem; *and not let* them *and* that *ſuffer for his Offences.*

Ver. 1. *HAVE Mercy upon me, O* God, *according to thy Loving-kindneſs: according unto the Multitude of thy tender Mercies, blot out my Tranſgreſſions.*] O God, the ſupream Judge of the World, whom I have moſt highly offended many Ways, and therefore may moſt juſtly be condemned to ſuffer the Effects of thy ſevereſt Diſpleaſure; I caſt down my ſelf before thee, and humbly ſupplicate for Mercy: unto which I am incouraged by thy known Clemency, and thy infinite Compaſſions; which will move thee, I hope, to take Pity upon a grievous Sinner, and to pardon the Adultery and Bloodſhed, accompanied with a Number of foul Circumſtances, which I have committed.

Ver. 2. *Waſh me throughly from mine Iniquity, and cleanſe me from my Sin.*] I have made my ſelf indeed exceeding loathſome by my repeated Wickedneſs, which, like a Stain that hath long ſtuck to a Garment, is not eaſily got out: but do not therefore, I beſeech thee, abhor me, but rather magnifie thy Mercy in purifying me perfectly, and cleanſing me ſo throughly, that there may be no Spot remaining in me.

Ver. 3. *For I acknowledge my Tranſgreſſions, and my Sin is ever before me.*] For how ſtupid ſoever I was, before thou ſenteſt thy Prophet to awaken me, I am now deeply touched with a Senſe of my horrid Tranſgreſſions: which I both ſorrowly confeſs and bewail in thy Preſence, and in the Face of the publick Congregation; and carry alſo a ſad and amazing Remembrance thereof continually before my Eyes.

Ver. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this Evil in thy Sight: that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt,* and *be clear when thou judgeſt.*] Not becauſe I ſtand in Fear of Puniſhment from Men, who have no Power over me; but becauſe I am ſo obnoxious to thee, whoſe Judgments I ought to dread the more, the leſs I am liable to give an Account of my Actions unto others. O how it afflicts me, that I preſumed, becauſe I had none to controul me here on Earth, to offend thy Majeſty, thy All-ſeeing Majeſty! at whoſe Tribunal the higheſt muſt be judged: And if thou ſhouldſt pronounce the heavieſt Sentence upon me for my Crimes, and execute it alſo with the greateſt Severity, I could not accuſe thee of too much Rigour; but muſt ſtill juſtifie thee in thy Proceedings, and clear thee from all ſuch unjuſt Imputations.

Ver. 5. *Behold, I was ſhapen in Iniquity: and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.*] It is true indeed, and thou, O Lord, knoweſt it better than I, that there is in me an innate Proneneſs to Evil: But I am ſo far from repreſenting this as an Excuſe for what I have done, that I confeſs the Conſideration of it ought to have made me the more watchful and diligent to ſuppreſs thoſe bad Inclinations; which I knew to be ſo natural, that I brought them into the World with me.

Ver. 6. *Behold, thou deſireſt Truth in the inward Parts: and in the hidden* Parts *thou ſhalt make me to know Wiſdom.*] I am amazed at my Folly, that I ſhould be ſo careleſs; when I was not ignorant that thou requireſt us not to entertain, with the leaſt Kindneſs, thoſe firſt Motions which we find in our Thoughts and Deſires after any Evil; but uprightly to oppoſe them: For which End thou haſt put a Principle of better Motions into us, and indued me with Wiſdom; which ſecretly checks and corrects thoſe brutiſh Inclinations.

Ver. 7. *Purge me with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean: waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow.*] I have nothing therefore to ſay in my own Behalf, but wholly betake my ſelf to thee for a gracious Pardon of my Sin, which every Thing I can think of ſadly aggravates. I am as impure as a Leper, and deſerve to be baniſhed from thy Preſence, and ſhut out from among thy People; far more impure by touching *Bathſheba*, than he is that toucheth a dead Body; yet I am not ſo foul, but, if thou pleaſeſt, thou canſt purifie me, and make me as clean and white as Snow: Vouchſafe me that Grace, O Lord; expiate me, I beſeech thee, (*Lev.* XIV. 6. *Numb.* XIX. 17, 18.) and reſtore me perfectly unto thy Favour, and the happy Fruits of it, which I have juſtly forfeited and loſt.

Ver. 8. *Make me to hear Joy and Gladneſs, that the Bones* which *thou haſt broken may rejoyce.*] Raiſe me out of this wofully dejected State wherein I lye; and as the terrible Meſſage I received by thy Prophet, hath caſt me into ſuch inſufferable Anguiſh and Pain, as if my Bones were cruſh'd in Pieces by my Fall: ſo ſend me the moſt comfortable News of my Reconciliation with thee; to eaſe me of the Torment I endure under the Weight of my Guilt, and the Sence of thy heavy Diſpleaſure; and to turn it into the Height of Joy and Gladneſs.

Ver. 9. *Hide thy Face from my Sins; and blot out all mine Iniquities.*] Remember not any longer how wicked I have been; nor lay my Sin to my Charge: But paſs by all my Tranſgreſſions, and acquit me from the Puniſhment they deſerve.

Ver.

Ver. 10. *Create in me a clean Heart, O* GOD; *and renew a right Spirit within me.*] And beſtow upon me withal ſuch Purity of Heart (which alas! I have loſt, and am not able to recover without thy Grace) that I may utterly hereafter deteſt all ſuch filthy Motions: And becauſe we are apt to revolt from our good Reſolutions, do thou daily ſupply me with freſh Strength from above, to confirm and ſettle them, that I may never return to Folly.

Ver. 11. *Caſt me not away from thy Preſence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.*] I deſerve, I confeſs, to be rejected by thee, as my Predeceſſor was, (1 *Sam.* XV. 25, 26.) and to be admitted no more into thy Favour: But, I humbly beſeech thee, deal not ſo ſeverely with me, nor deprive me (as thou didſt him, compare 1 *Sam.* X. 6. with XVI. 14.) of the Gift of thy Holy Spirit, wherewith thou haſt anointed me, (*ib.* v. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Reſtore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation: and uphold me* with thy *free Spirit.*] Let not that evil Spirit which troubled him, ſeize on me; but reſtore to me the Joy which I was wont to have, when I ſaw my ſelf ſo much in thy Favour, as to be delivered by thee out of the greateſt Danger (*Pſalm* XXI. 1.) ſupport me and my Authority, with ſuch a chearful, free and generous Spirit; as becomes him whom thou haſt appointed to be the Governour of thy People.

Ver. 13. Then *will I teach Tranſgreſſors thy Ways, and Sinners ſhall be converted unto thee.*] That I may have the Confidence to admoniſh thoſe of their Duty, that tranſgreſs thy Laws (as I will not fail to do) and they may not take the Boldneſs to deſpiſe my Inſtructions: But the very worſt of them may by my Authority and my Example be reclaimed from their ſinful Lives, and become, like me, thy faithful Servants.

Ver. 14. *Deliver me from Bloud-guiltineſs,* O GOD, *thou* GOD *of my Salvation*: and *my Tongue ſhall ſing aloud of thy Righteouſneſs.*] Though I have added the Sin of Murther to that of Adultery, the Murther of a truſty Servant, of ſeveral of my Servants, (2 *Sam.* XI. 17.) who by my Order were expoſed to that Danger wherein they loſt their Lives; let it not hinder this Grace which I beg of thee; but, O GOD, the GOD from whom I have received ſo many Deliverances and Bleſſings, vouchſafe this one Favour more, to deliver me from the Puniſhment due to this crying Sin: and I will not ſpare to proclaim, as loud as ever I can, thy infinite Goodneſs and Clemency; together with thy Truth and Faithfulneſs in thy Promiſes to returning Sinners: It ſhall be my Joy to ſpeak of theſe, though therewithal I publiſh my own moſt horrid Wickedneſs.

Ver. 15. *O* LORD, *open thou my Lips, and my Mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy Praiſe.*] Try me, O GOD, and let the Senſe of thy gracious Pardon give me the Boldneſs and Liberty to open my Lips (which Shame, Confuſion and Fear have cloſed and ſhut up) and my Mouth ſhall every where declare thy Mercy, to thy perpetual Praiſe and Renown.

Ver. 16. *For thou deſireſt not Sacrifice, elſe would I give* it: *thou delighteſt not in Burnt-offering.*] This ſhall be the Sacrifice I will offer to thee, as an Acknowledgment of thy Kindneſs; but that of Beaſts, I know, thou deſireſt not I ſhould bring thee: The whole Burnt-offerings being no Pleaſure at all to thee, but only as they are Tokens of a grateful Mind.

Ver. 17. *The Sacrifices of* GOD are *a broken Spirit: a broken and contrite Heart, O* GOD, *thou wilt not deſpiſe.*] With which I will alſo join that divine Sacrifice of a humble, ſorrowful and penitent Heart: For a Soul that is truly contrite, and intirely ſubmits its Will to thine, is ſuch an acceptable Sacrifice, that thou canſt not poſſibly reject it.

Ver. 18. *Do Good in thy good Pleaſure unto Zion: build thou the Walls of Jeruſalem.*] And the ſame Mercy I deſire for my ſelf, I beg alſo for all thy People. Spare them, good LORD; and let not my Folly be the Occaſion of bringing upon them any Calamity; or upon that City, which is called after my Name, where I have ſet both thy Throne, and mine: (2 *Sam.* V. 7, 9. VI. 16.) But be favourable to that Place, and do it good; let the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, which I have begun to build, (2 *Sam.* V. 9.) be perfectly finiſhed, 1 *King.* III. 1. XI. 27.

Ver. 19. *Then ſhalt thou be pleaſed with the Sacrifices of Righteouſneſs, with Burnt-offering, and whole Burnt-offering: then ſhall they offer Bullocks upon thine Altar.*] Then ſhall the Righteous be very thankful to thee; and expreſs it by bringing Peace-offerings in Abundance, and all other Sacrifices: They ſhall offer thee the choiceſt Sacrifices upon thy Altar (1 *King.* III. 5. VIII. 63, 64.) which from ſuch pious Perſons ſhall be acceptable to thy Majeſty.

PSALM LII.

To the Chief Muſician. *Maſchil.* A Pſalm of *David*; when *Doeg* the *Edomite* came and told *Saul*, and ſaid unto him, *David* is come to the Houſe of *Ahimelech.*

ARGUMENT.

The Title ſufficiently inſtructs every one about the Author, and in the Occaſion of this Pſalm, if they will but read the Hiſtory to which it directs them in 1 Sam. *XXII. where* Doeg *(one of the Seed of* Eſau, *or that had lived ſo long among them, that he had got the Name, as well as the ſavage Manners of the* Edomites*) to ingratiate himſelf with* Saul, *pretended to diſcover thoſe who were confederate with* David, *particularly* Ahimelech: *whom he undertook alſo to kill, together with all his Family, when others refuſed that bloody Charge which* Saul *would have impoſed on them. And when he had done, it ſhould ſeem he bragged of it, as if it had been ſome gallant Action, or famous Atchievement; as is intimated, I take it, in the firſt Verſe of the Pſalm. Which* David *penned when* Abiathar *(who was the only Perſon that eſcaped in that Slaughter, whereby they thought to terrifie others from harbouring* David, *or ſhewing any Kindneſs to him) came and brought him the ſad Tidings of what was befaln their City. And it was afterwards delivered to the Maſter of the Muſick in the Tabernacle, to be ſung in perpetual Memory of the Thing, to the vulgar Tune called* Maſchil, *(ſee Pſalm. XXXII.) or, as*

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Theodoret *ſeems here to expound the Word, to fortifie thoſe with Patience and Conſtancy, who unjuſtly ſuffer; by* inſtructing *them in the Juſtice of the divine Sentence in the Iſſue.*

Ver. 1. *WHT boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in Miſchief, O mighty Man? The Goodneſs of* GOD endureth *continually.*] A goodly Feat indeed for a Man to boaſt of! that he hath killed LXXXV. innocent and unarmed Prieſts, together with a Company of Women, Children, and Sucklings, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 19.) A mighty Champion thou art; who vapoureſt, no doubt, that thou wilt do the like Execution upon me: But know, vain Man, that the Goodneſs of GOD, whereby I have been hitherto preſerved (1 *Sam.* XXII. 1, 3, 5.) will ſtill defend me; for it is not a Thing of ſhort Continuance, like our Prince his Favour, but laſts for ever.

Ver. 2. *Thy Tongue deviſeth Miſchiefs: like a ſharp Razor working deceitfully.*] O thou Contriver of falſe Stories! who pretendeſt to be the only or moſt loyal Perſon in the Court of *Saul*, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 8, 9.) but art an egregious Hypocrite; a meer Deſigner of Miſchief to others, thereby to advance thy ſelf: Thy Tongue was the firſt Inſtrument in this Butchery, being ſharpened by thy Malice on Purpoſe like a Razor newly ſet, to cut the Throats of the guiltleſs, that thou mighteſt ſeem to be the moſt zealous of all others for the Safety of the King's Perſon and Government.

Ver. 3. *Thou loveſt evil more than good: and Lying rather than to ſpeak Righteouſneſs. Selah.*] To have told the plain Truth would not have ſerved thy Ambition and thy Malice; which make thee love to do Miſchief, rather than good Offices unto others; and to deviſe Lies againſt *Abimelech*, rather than to declare his Innocence.

Ver. 4. *Thou loveſt all devouring Words, O thou deceitful Tongue.*] Thou careſt not whom thou deſtroyeſt, but can ſwallow up a whole City at a Morſel: O thou falſe Tongue, who, to curry Favour with thy Prince, deviſeſt the moſt impudent Lyes againſt thoſe that never offended him.

Ver. 5. GOD *ſhall likewiſe deſtroy thee for ever, he ſhall take thee away, and pluck thee out of* thy *Dwelling-place, and root thee out of the Land of the Living. Selah.*] The great GOD, whoſe Prieſts thou haſt ſlain, ſhall avenge their Cauſe, and pull thee from that Greatneſs and Honour to which thou ſeekeſt, by this vile Means, to raiſe thy ſelf: And more than that, he will pay thee in the ſame Coin thou haſt dealt to them; for he will utterly deſtroy thee, and ſnatch thee away as haſtily as thou didſt thoſe Innocents; juſt ſo will he pluck thee from the Tabernacle of GOD, (where thou waſt wont to pretend Devotion, 1 *Sam.* XXI. 7.) and root out, not only thee, but all thy Family, from the Face of the Earth.

Ver. 6. *The righteous alſo ſhall ſee and fear, and ſhall laugh at him.*] Which juſt Judgment of GOD upon thee, all good Men ſhall mark, and be confirmed thereby in their pious Fear of offending him; and reflecting upon thy vain Devices to greaten thy ſelf and Family, ſhall deride thy Folly, ſaying as I do;

Ver. 7. *Lo, this* is *the Man,* that *made not* GOD *his Strength: but truſted in the Abundance of his Riches,* and *ſtrengthened himſelf in his Wickedneſs.*] Behold that mighty Man, that principal Favourite, who regarded not GOD, nor ſought to ſupport himſelf by his Favour, but laid the Foundation of his Fortune (as we ſpeak) meerly in Abundance of Riches, and the Favour of his Prince: In which alſo he endeavoured to eſtabliſh himſelf, not by honeſt Means, but by the moſt perfidious Arts, and cruel Enterpriſes; what now is become of him? and where is his Greatneſs? Lo, his ambitious Hopes are all vaniſhed and come to nothing.

Ver. 8. *But I* am *like a green Olive-tree in the Houſe of* GOD: *I truſt in the Mercy of* GOD *for ever and ever.*] Whilſt I, at whom he principally aimed in his murderous Deſign, am ſtill, bleſſed be GOD, in Safety; nay, compared with that Deſtruction which ſhall fall on him, in a flouriſhing Condition: For he ſhall drop away like a withered Leaf; but I grow and encreaſe in Strength, like a green Olive-tree planted in the Courts of GOD's Houſe; whoſe Mercy, I truſt, will preſerve me to my Life's End from all the Miſchiefs they deviſe againſt me, and make me more and more flouriſhing, both in my Perſon and in my Poſterity.

Ver. 9. *I will praiſe thee for ever, becauſe thou haſt done* it: *and I will wait on thy Name, for it* is *good before thy Saints.*] For which I will never ceaſe to praiſe thee, becauſe I owe it entirely to thee that I am not deſtroyed; and I will patiently expect the Accompliſhment of thy Promiſes to me: For all thy pious Servants have ever found this to be the beſt and wiſeſt Courſe, to depend upon thy Omnipotent Goodneſs, and faithful Promiſes, and not to imitate thoſe wicked Men, who ſtudy to advance or preſerve themſelves by Flattery, or other viler Practices.

PSALM LIII.

To the Chief Muſician upon *Mahalath. Maſchil.* A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, and the XIV. differ ſo little, that it hath troubled Interpreters to give a Reaſon for the Repetition of the ſame Thing, almoſt in the ſame Words. There is ſome Variation indeed in every Verſe, but it is merely the Change of one Word for another of the ſame Import; (as for Example, GOD *for* LORD, *v.* 2, 4, 9.) *except only Verſe the* fifth, *where there is a much greater Alteration; and the* ſixth *wholly omitted; which makes it probable there was ſome new Occaſion for the uſing this Hymn again, though an Occaſion exceeding like the former. What it was, Writers do but gueſs; and if I take the Liberty alſo to interpoſe my Conjecture, it will be nothing ſo remote, as all thoſe that I have met withal ſeem to be.*

If we ſuppoſe the Defection of the People in the Rebellion of Abſalom, *to have been the Matter of his Complaint in the XIV. Pſalm; then it looks like a Probability, that the new* Revolt *which the* Iſraelites *generally made, immediately after the other, before* David *had quite recovered* Jeruſalem, *and his Settlement there, was the*

the Occasion of this. For you read, that upon the Quarrel which arose between the Men of Judah *and the Men of* Israel, *about Precedency in bringing back the King,* Sheba *blew the Trumpet of Rebellion afresh; and it is said, that every Man of* Israel *left* David, *and followed after him,* 2 Sam. XX. 2. *This is the Revolt, I apprehend, here spoken of,* v. 3. *where the Psalmist says,* Every one of them is gone back. *And a dangerous Revolt it was, as* David *apprehended, more dangerous than the former, unless timely check'd,* (2 Sam. XX. 6.) *which made him, before all his Army could be assembled,* (v. 5.) *send his Guards to pursue him speedily,* v. 7. *As they did through all the Tribes of* Israel, v. 14. *Who being afraid of the Issue,* (v. 5. *of this Psalm*) *fell off from* Sheba *more and more, the farther he went, and left him at last to shift for himself, so that he was shut up in the City of* Abel, *there taken and beheaded,* v. 22. *After which his Body, it is likely, was exposed to the Fowls of the Air, or the Wild Beasts; insomuch that his Bones were indeed at last scattered,* (*as the Psalmist here speaks,* v. 5.) *and all his Adherents made contemptible.*

This David *desired should be commemorated together with his Deliverance from* Absalom's *Rebellion; and therefore making a Review of the XIV. Psalm, (wherein that Distress is described) he delivered it again to the Master of the Musick (as appeared after the first Collection of the Book of Psalms was finished) with some small Alterations, relating to this new Business; desiring* God, *for Instance, to give them still some farther and new* Salvation, *v. 6. For the Word here is in the plural Number, but in the XIV. Psalm in the singular; which hath made me render it here* complete Salvation, *which he implores with the same Earnestness he had done before, and orders also how the Psalm shall be sung upon* Mahalath, *or the hollow Instrument; (Flute or Pipe) to the Tune of* Maschil, *(or as a Caveat against Rebellion, see Psal. XXXII.)*

If any be not satisfied with this Account of the Psalm, because of the Word Captivity, *in the last Verse, which they may think ought to be taken properly; then they may suppose this Psalm to have been reviewed by* Asaph *the Seer, in the Days of* Hezekiah, *when Abundance of the People had been indeed carried captive,* Isa. V. 13. *But there is no need to have Recourse to this: for the Word* Captivity *imports no more, in some Places, but only* great Desolation; *such as was made of* Job's *Estate and Family, XLII.* 10. *and by the* Philistines, *when* Shiloh *was destroyed,* Judg. XVIII. 30, 31.

Ver. 1. THE *Fool hath said in his Heart,* There is *no* God; *corrupt are they, and have done abominable Iniquity: there is none that doth good.*] Though the Wicked are not yet so impudent as openly to deny God with their Mouths; yet such is their abominable Filthiness, so shameless are they in their Wickedness, so universally depraved, that their secret Thoughts are, God takes no Notice of what they do, or that he will not judge them for it.

Ver. 2. God *looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek* God.] But let them know that he exactly observes them, and all the Ways of the Sons of Men, which are naked and bare before his Eyes; though alas! there is nothing now to be seen but Ignorance and Contempt of his Majesty.

Ver. 3. *Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy: there is none* that *doth good, no not one.*] The *Israelites* have made a new Separation, and are entirely revolted; being like a Body without Spirit, so rotten and putrified, that it is hard to find so much as one that hath any kind of Goodness in him.

Ver. 4. *Have the Workers of Iniquity no Knowledge,* who *eat up my People* as *they eat Bread; they have not called upon* God.] Strange, that they should still be thus senseless! and (after such a Defeat as they have lately received) continue to work Iniquity; nay, to be cruel and void of all Pity and Compassion to my poor People; the Reason is, they have no Religion.

Ver. 5. *There were they in great Fear* where *no Fear was: for* God *hath scattered the Bones of him that encampeth* against *thee; thou hast put* them *to Shame, because* God *hath despised them.*] And none more cowardly than such Atheistical Wretches; whose Courage so soon failed them, that a panick Fear seized them before my Forces could approach them: For they ran away, and dispersed themselves, when I sent but a small Party after them. God, O my Soul, hath broken him in Pieces, and his Bones lie scattered on the Ground, who thought to oppress thee: Thou hast obtained this Favour of him, to put them to Shame; for he despised those who had so little Regard to his Majesty.

Ver. 6. *O that the Salvation of Israel* were come *out of Sion! when* God *bringeth back the Captivity of his People, Jacob shall rejoice,* and *Israel shall be glad.*] And he is mighty to save, (whatsoever such wicked People think) and resides, by a special Token of his Presence there, on Mount *Sion*: O that it might please him to compleat our Deliverance from thence; and restore us all again to the happy Enjoyment of that Place, from whence we have been banished: It would turn our sad Lamentations into the most chearful Thanksgivings; and fill not only *Judah*, but all the Tribes of *Israel*, with Joy and Gladness.

PSALM LIV.

To the Chief Musician on *Neginoth. Maschil.* A Psalm of *David*, when the *Ziphites* came and said to *Saul*, Doth not *David* hide himself with us?

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the Title tells us, was composed, when (not long after the Butchery of Doeg) the Ziphites, *a false People, void of Humanity, and that sought nothing but how to raise themselves, though by another's Ruin, endeavoured to ingratiate themselves with* Saul, *by dis-*

discovering to him where David *lurkt in their Neighbourhood*: (1 Sam. *XXIII.* 14, 19.) *and undertook to guide the King to the very Place, and assist the Forces he should send to take him, v.* 20, &c. *By which Means* David *was brought into such a great Strait, (v.* 26.) *that if* Saul *had not been diverted by a sudden Invasion which the* Philistines *made, he could not have escaped him. In this Distress, he made his Address to* God *by Prayer, in the Words of the three first Verses of this Psalm. But on a sudden (hearing, I suppose, how* Saul *himself was alarm'd with the News of an Invasion) he breaks out, v.* 4, 5. *into Admiration of* God's *Goodness. And when the Danger was quite over, added, I suppose, the two last Verses; wherein he expresses with what Joy he took a View, from the Mountain where he lay hid, of* Saul's *Forces as they retreated. Which was a Thing so memorable, that, when he came to the Kingdom, he delivered the whole to the Master of Musick in the Tabernacle, to be sung as the IV. Psalm, to the Tune of* Maschil.

Ver. 1. *SAVE me, O* God, *by thy Name, and judge me by thy Strength.*] O God, whose Name imports that thou art the supreme Judge, and therefore the Defender and Protector of all injured and oppressed Persons; I humbly implore thy Aid in this great Distress; beseeching thee, who can easily do it, to deliver me from my Enemies, and by thy Almighty Power vindicate my Innocence; and maintain my righteous Cause against those that are too strong for me, and wrongfully seek to destroy me.

Ver. 2. *Hear my Prayer, O* God: *give ear to the Words of my Mouth.*] Deny me not this Request, O God, I most earnestly intreat thee; but grant the Petitions of thy poor Servant, who hath nothing but his Prayers to oppose to all those Forces that surround him.

Ver. 3. *For Strangers are risen up against me, and Oppressours seek after my Soul; they have not set* God *before them. Selah.*] And they are conducted by barbarous People, whom I have no Way disobliged, for I never had any Thing to do with them; and yet they have undertaken to deliver me into the Hand of *Saul*, and those formidable Enemies that are come to seek my Life: (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 20.) having no Regard to God at all; but only studying, right or wrong, to gain the Favour of their Prince.

Ver. 4. *Behold,* God *is mine Helper: the* Lord *is with them that uphold my Soul.*] O the wonderful Goodness of God! who in this deplorable Condition sends me, in a strange and unexpected Manner, most seasonable Relief! Behold, how he takes my Part, the Lord preserves my Life: For, alas! the small Forces I have with me, are unable to secure it; and can by no Means support me against those numerous Enemies that thought to destroy me.

Ver. 5. *He shall reward evil unto my Enemies; cut them off in thy Truth.*] And as for those Spies that undertook to find out all my hiding-places, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 22, 23.) He shall bring the Mischief they intended to me, upon themselves. Take a just Vengeance on them, and execute thy Threatnings, O Lord, against such treacherous Persons.

Ver. 6. *I will freely sacrifice unto thee; I will praise thy Name, O* Lord, *for it is good.*] In the mean Time I will not be sparing in expressing my Thankfulness for what thou hast done already, but make thee my grateful Acknowledgments both in Word and Deed. First, I will offer thee liberal Sacrifices; and then I will accompany them with my Praises of thy Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, O Lord; which is the most pleasing Sacrifice, I know, unto thee, and the most delightful Employment unto me.

Ver. 7. *For he hath delivered me out of all Trouble: and mine Eye hath seen* his Desire *upon mine Enemies.*] Who, by his special Providence, am marvellously delivered out of that Distress wherein I was, and all the Dangers which it threatned: For my Eyes now dare look upon those Enemies in their Retreat, from whom I lately fled for Fear. (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26, 27, 28.)

PSALM LV.

To the Chief Musician on *Neginoth. Maschil.* A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was sent to the Master of the Musick, to be sung as the former: having an Occasion something like it. For the Complaint which he makes in the middle of the Psalm, that his greatest Confident proved treacherous to him, makes it probable that it was composed when Absalom's *Rebellion broke out, and he was forced to flee suddenly from* Jerusalem: *and as he was going barefoot upon Mount* Olivet, *(he and all his Company weeping) to increase his Sorrow, met with the News that* Ahitophel *also was among the Conspirators,* 2 Sam. *XV.* 31. *Upon which, we read there, he presently fell to his Prayers; and as soon as he came to a Place where he could rest and retire himself, he represented, it is likely, the Sadness of his Condition more largely in this Psalm: beseeching* God *to disappoint the Conspirators, v.* 9. *First, because of the Violence they had committed at* Jerusalem, *(v.* 9, 10, 11.) *and, Secondly, because of the vile Treachery of* Ahitophel, *from the* 12*th to the* 15*th, which seems to me, ought to be connected with the Beginning of the* 9*th Verse; for he goes on in the* 15*th, to beseech* God *to defeat them all, which he had begun in the* 9*th, but breaks off to insert his Reasons why he was so earnest. And then, in the Conclusion, he exhorts all those that adhered to him, not to be discouraged; but to cast their Care upon the* Lord: *who would reward their pious Confidence in him; by protecting and delivering them, and destroying their and his Enemies.*

Ver. 1. *GIVE ear to my Prayer, O* God: *and hide not thy self from my Supplication.*] O God, the supreme Judge of all the World, I most humbly address my self to thee, who art inclined to relieve those that are oppressed: beseeching thee not to reject a poor Supplicant, but graciously to receive his Petition which he puts up unto thee.

Ver. 2. *Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn*

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in my Complaint, and make a Noise.] Let the Sadneſs of my Condition move thee to conſider and relieve me; which I am not able to repreſent in my Prayer, without Shrieks, and lamentable Cries: ſo great is the Perturbation of my Mind.

Ver. 3. *Becauſe of the Voice of the Enemy, becauſe of the Oppreſſion of the wicked: for they caſt Iniquity upon me, and in Wrath they hate me.*] Becauſe my own Son is become my Enemy, and hath blown the Trumpet of Rebellion againſt me, (2 *Sam.* XV. 10.) and becauſe of the ſore Straits to which he hath wickedly reduced me: For which, that there might be ſome Colour, he and his Aſſociates load me with falſe Accuſations, and ſay I am unjuſt, and take no care of my People, (2 *Sam.* XV. 3, 4.) and therefore furiouſly ſet themſelves againſt me to dethrone me.

Ver. 4. *My Heart is ſore pained within me: and the Terrours of Death are fallen upon me.*] This is a ſore Grief unto my Heart, and puts me into the very Agonies of Death: Which, without thy Mercy, I muſt ſuddenly expect, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Fearfulneſs and Trembling are come upon me, and Horrour hath overwhelmed me.*] The Suddenneſs and Strength of this Conſpiracy hath ſtruck me into ſuch a Fear, as makes me tremble: I am involved in ſuch Difficulties, that, which Way ſoever I look, Horrour and Conſternation ſeize upon me.

Ver. 6. *And I ſaid, O that I had Wings like a Dove; for* then *would I fly away, and be at reſt.*] In this Confuſion, I rather wiſh'd than hoped to eſcape, (2 *Sam.* XV. 14.) ſaying, Who will lend me Wings as ſwift as thoſe of a Dove, that I may flee away to ſome Place of Safety and Repoſe?

Ver. 7. *Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the Wilderneſs. Selah.*] Lo, then would I go to ſome far diſtant Countrey, though I wandred I knew not whither (2 *Sam.* XV. 20.) I would hide my ſelf in ſome deſert Place, remote from all Society.

Ver. 8. *I would haſten my Eſcape from the windy Storm* and *Tempeſt.*] And I would make all the haſt imaginable to eſcape this fierce Perſecution, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 16, 21.) which is riſen like a ſudden Storm of Wind, or violent Tempeſt, and threatens utterly to ſubvert me.

Ver. 9. *Deſtroy,* O LORD, and *divide their Tongues: for I have ſeen Violence and Strife in the City.*] O LORD, let that ſpeedy Deſtruction ſwallow up them, which they deſign againſt me, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 16.) divide their Counſels, and raiſe Diſſentions among them, 2 *Sam.* XV. 34. XVII. 14, 15.) for I am certainly informed, that by Rapine and Cruelty, Brawling and Contention, they have filled the whole City of *Jeruſalem* with Tumult and Confuſion.

Ver. 10. *Day and Night they go about it upon the Walls thereof: Miſchief alſo and Sorrow* are *in the midſt of it.*] There is nothing elſe to be ſeen, either by Day or by Night: For they that guard the Gates, or go the Rounds, make it their Buſineſs to ravage and ſpoil, to pick Quarrels, and fall out with every Body they meet withal: and ſuch as run to the main Guards, in hope to meet with ſome Relief, are miſerably deceived; for there the ſame Iniquity, Oppreſſion, and injurious Dealing, keep their Station.

Ver. 11. *Wickedneſs* is *in the midſt thereof: Deceit and Guile depart not from her Streets.*] There is no Place free either from their open Violence, or ſecret Fraud and Deceit: But they barbarouſly abuſe, or cunningly circumvent the Inhabitants, both within Doors and without.

Ver. 12. *For* it was *not an Enemy* that *reproached me, then I could have born* it; *neither* was it *he that hated me*, that *did magnifie* himſelf *againſt me, then I would have hid my ſelf from him.*] And there is one moſt notorious Traitor, whoſe Ingratitude deſerves to be ſeverely puniſhed; for he hath maliciouſly reproached and calumniated me and my Government, when I thought of no ſuch Treachery: For we never had any Quarrel, (then his Treaſon would not have been ſo ſtrange, but far more tolerable:) nor did he give any Sign of Hatred to me; for then I could have ſecured my ſelf, by withdrawing from his Familiarity.

Ver. 13. *But* it was *thou, a Man, mine Equal, my Guide, and mine Acquaintance.*] No; thou, O moſt perfidious of all Mankind, who contriveſt this Miſchief againſt me, waſt the Perſon whom I eſteemed above all others; whom I loved as my ſelf; whoſe Counſel I ever followed; and to whom, as my Friend, I unboſomed all my Secrets:

Ver. 14. *We took ſweet Counſel together,* and *walked unto the Houſe of* GOD *in Company.*] Whoſe Converſation was moſt delightful to me, and to whom I thought I had been tied, not only by the Bond of civil Friendſhip, but (which is far ſtronger) of Religion.

Ver. 15. *Let Death ſeize upon them,* and *let them go down quick into Hell: for Wickedneſs* is *in their Dwellings,* and *among them.*] Let Death ſeize on them as unexpectedly as this Treaſon broke out againſt me: Let them ſink on a ſudden into the Grave, when they think of nothing leſs; for whereſoever they go, all Manner of Miſchief marches along with them.

Ver. 16. *As for me, I will call upon* GOD: *and the* LORD *ſhall ſave me.*] As for me, I will injure no Body to preſerve my ſelf, but only commend my ſelf and my Cauſe to GOD, the righteous Judge: And the Almighty LORD, who changes not, will deliver me, as he hath done formerly.

Ver. 17. *Evening and Morning, and at Noon will I pray, and cry aloud: and he ſhall hear my Voice.*] For this I will not ceaſe to ſollicit him when I go to Bed, and when I riſe, and before I take my Repaſt: Both in my inward Thoughts, and with my Mouth, in ſilent Deſires and lamentable Moans, I will never give over my Importunity, till he graciouſly grant my Petition, and ſend me Relief.

Ver. 18. *He hath delivered my Soul in Peace from the Battel that was againſt me; for there were many with me.*] He will reſcue me from the Hand of this rebellious Army which comes againſt me, and reſtore me to my Throne in Peace: For be they never ſo numerous, there is a far greater Power on my ſide to defend me, and to fight for me.

Ver. 19. GOD *ſhall hear and afflict them, even he that abideth of old, Selah: becauſe they* have *no Changes, therefore they fear not* GOD.] GOD himſelf, who hath ſo long governed the World moſt juſtly, and never alters nor changes, will hear my Prayer, and bring down their Pride: For having proſpered hitherto in their Villany, there is not one of them that repents; but they

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all pertinaciouſly perſiſt in their Rebellion, without any Fear of the Divine Vengeance.

Ver. 20. *He hath put forth his Hands againſt ſuch as be at Peace with him: he hath broken his Covenant.*] Eſpecially that perfidious Perſon, who hath not only violated all the Laws of Friendſhip; but profanely broken his Promiſe and Oath of Fidelity, wherein he was enguged to me.

Ver. 21. The Words *of his Mouth were ſmoother than Butter, but War* was *in his Heart: his Words were ſofter than Oyl, yet* were *they drawn Swords.*] Nothing can be falſer than he; who entertained me with the faireſt and ſmootheſt Language, when at the ſame Time he was contriving this Rebellion in his Heart: All his ſoft Words and tender Profeſſions of Kindneſs to me, ſerved only to hide his Deſign of giving me a mortal Wound.

Ver. 22. *Caſt thy Burthen upon the* LORD, *and he ſhall ſuſtain thee: he ſhall never ſuffer the Righteous to be moved.*] But why do I trouble my ſelf any farther with him? Be not dejected, O my Soul, (and let me give this Counſel to every one that adheres to me) but repoſing thy humble Truſt in GOD, caſt all the Burthens of thy Cares upon him; who will certainly ſupport thee under any Troubles that he is pleaſed to impoſe upon thee. Preſerve thy Integrity; and, though thou maiſt be ſhaken and diſturbed for a Time, he will not ſuffer thee to be moved out of thy Place, but quietly ſettle thee there again.

Ver. 23. *But thou, O* GOD, *ſhalt bring them down into the Pit of Deſtruction: bloody and deceitful Men ſhall not live out half their Days, but I will truſt in thee.*] But as for thoſe that have given me this Diſturbance, thou, O GOD, wilt bring them to an untimely End; and throw them headlong into the Pit of Deſtruction. They are Men that thirſt after Blood, and by all Manner of Fraud and Treachery endeavour to compaſs their Ends: And ſuch ſhall periſh in the Flower of their Age; when I truſt to ſpend my Days in Proſperity and Peace.

PSALM LVI.

To the Chief Muſician, upon *Jonath-elem-rechokim. Michtam* of *David*, when the *Philiſtines* took him in *Gath.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by David, *when, for Fear of* Saul, *he fled like an innocent Dove into remote Countries. More particularly when he was forced to take Shelter among the* Philiſtines *in* Gath, 1 Sam. XXI. *where the Lords of the Court brought him to King* Achiſh, *with ſuch high Commendations of his Valour, as he thought might indanger his Life. And therefore he put on the Guiſe of a Man beſide himſelf; ſilently bewailing the Sadneſs of his Condition, which conſtrained him to make Uſe of ſuch Artifices; and complaining to* GOD *of the Cruelty of his Enemies, who had driven him into this and many other Straits: But making no Remonſtrances to* Achiſh *how he was uſed, nor begging his Aſſiſtance againſt them. Not a Word of this; which is the Reaſon, poſſibly, why he compares himſelf here in the Title to a* ſilent or dumb Dove, *if Interpreters rightly underſtand the Words* Jonath Elem, *which they expound in that Manner. And* Kimchi *thinks, he the rather compares himſelf to a* Dove, *becauſe that is accounted a* ſilly Creature, (Hoſea VII. verſ. 11.) *and* David *now ſeemed no better.*

And this is the Reaſon that this Pſalm is alſo called Michtam (*ſee Pſal.* XVI.) *becauſe it is a Commemoration of* GOD's *ſingular Care over him, in many great Dangers; eſpecially at* Gath; *When he intirely depended upon his Favour and Love alone; ſupporting himſelf (and ſeeking no farther for Help) by his gracious Promiſe to him; which he thankfully acknowledges, eſpecially in the Concluſion of this Pſalm.*

Which was penned, it appears from v. 8. *after many Wandrings of this good Man; firſt, to* Samuel *in* Naioth, 1 Sam. XIX. 18. *then, to* Jonathan, XX. 1. *then, to* Nob, *XXI.* 1. *after that to* Gath, *v.* 10. *from thence to* Adullam, *XXII.* 1. *and then, into the Country of* Moab, *v.* 3. *from whence he was admoniſhed by the Prophet* Gad, *to go to a Place of greater Security, v.* 6. *which he found in the Foreſt of* Hareth, 1 Sam. *XXII.* 5. *where, I ſuppoſe, he might have a little Repoſe and Leiſure, to reflect upon what was paſt, and to compoſe this Pſalm: And from that Foreſt, I fanſy, he might call himſelf (if we admit of* Bochartus *his Change of one Point,* Lib. 1. de Animal. Cap. 3. Part 2.) Jonath-Elim rechokim, *A Dove in the remote Woods. Where he made this Pſalm before the reſt of his Wandrings to other Places, which afterwards followed. And when he came to the Kingdom, he delivered it to the chief Maſter of Muſick, to be ſung after the Tune of a Song, which began with thoſe Words (as* Aben-Ezra *takes it)* Jonath-Elim rechokim.

Ver. 1. BE *merciful unto me,* O GOD, *for Man would ſwallow me up: he fighting daily oppreſſeth me.*] O GOD, the ſupreme, and therefore impartial Judge of all the World, take Pity upon me, I beſeech thee, and reſcue me from the Violence of my Enemies: For *Saul*, forgetting his own Mortality, and how unſeemly it is for frail Man to continue his Enmities for ever, moſt eagerly purſues me, with an inſatiable Deſire to take away my Life; He never intermits his Perſecutions, but preſſes me ſo cloſely, that he gives me no Time to breath.

Ver. 2. *Mine Enemies would daily ſwallow me up: for they be many that fight againſt me, O thou moſt high.*] He ſends abroad his Spies, to watch all Opportunities to inſnare me; for which they gape as greedily as ravenous Beaſts do for their Prey: And great Multitudes there are, O thou moſt high, (who alone canſt diſappoint them) that, proud of their Numbers and of their Power, have inſolently ſet themſelves againſt me to deſtroy me.

Ver. 3. *What Time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee.*] As I have juſt Reaſon to fear thy Will, unleſs I be defended by thee, with whom I have intruſted my ſelf and all my Concerns; which is the only Thing whereby I overcome thoſe Fears when they ſeize upon me.

Ver. 4. *In* GOD *I will praiſe his Word, in* GOD *I have put my Truſt, I will not fear what Fleſh can do unto me.*] By the Help of GOD I

Will

will be ſo far from being diſmayed, that I will rejoice in his faithful Promiſe he hath made to me by his Prophet, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 13. 2 *Sam.* III. 9. V. 2.) Tho' it be not fulfilled preſently, yet by his Aſſiſtance I will depend, as I have done hitherto, upon his Fidelity for the Performance of it, and never fear what frail Man can do to hinder it.

Ver. 5. *Every Day they wreſt my Words; all their Thoughts are againſt me for evil.*] I know what an ill Conſtruction my Enemies would put upon theſe Words, if they could hear what I ſay; for they do nothing but wreſt the moſt innocent Speeches; and becauſe I profeſs to confide in GOD, pretend that I conſpire againſt the King, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 9.) their whole Buſineſs being nothing elſe, but to contrive how to do me Miſchief.

Ver. 6. *They gather themſelves together, they hide themſelves, they mark my Steps, when they wait for my Soul.*] For this End they hold many Conſultations among themſelves, and lay Snares privily for me; curiouſly obſerving all my Motions, and ſtill expecting an Opportunity to take away my Life.

Ver. 7. *Shall they eſcape by Iniquity? in* thine *Anger caſt down the People, O* GOD.] Shall this Iniquity alway go unpuniſhed? Or by their Subtilty and Craft ſhall they, who thus unjuſtly perſecute the Innocent, eſcape thy Vengeance? O GOD, the righteous Judge, throw down thoſe inſolent People, who have ſo long provoked thy Patience; and make them feel the Effects of thy juſt Diſpleaſure.

Ver. 8. *Thou telleſt my Wandrings, put thou my Tears into thy Bottle:* are they *not in thy Book?*] Thou art perfectly acquainted, I am ſure, how often I have been forced to fly, like a Vagabond, from place to place; which hath coſt me many a Tear: Good LORD, preſerve a kind Remembrance of them; and let them not periſh as Things thou nothing regardeſt. But why am I ſo importunate for this, ſince I know thou art ſo far from deſpiſing my Miſery, that thou art as mindful of it, as if thou kepteſt a Regiſter of every Tear, and of all my Troubles?

Ver. 9. *When I cry* unto thee, *then ſhall mine Enemies turn back: this I know, for* GOD is *for me.*] My Prayer therefore ſhall prevail, when my Enemies oppreſs me, and obtain a glorious Victory over them; of this I am aſſured, becauſe the Mighty GOD, who rules all the World, is on my Side.

Ver. 10. *In* GOD *will I praiſe* his *Word: in the* LORD *will I praiſe* his *Word.*] By his gracious Aſſiſtance I will continue my Reſolution, to rejoice in the faithful Promiſe I before mentioned: He is the Eternal LORD, who never alters nor changes, and I will be like him, immutably rejoicing in that faithful Promiſe.

Ver. 11. *In* GOD *have I put my Truſt: I will not be afraid what Man can do unto me.*] Nothing ſhall ſhake the Confidence I have repoſed in him; nor will I fear what the greateſt Man can do, were he more powerful than he is, to hinder the Accompliſhment of what the LORD deſigns for me.

Ver. 12. *Thy Vows* are *upon me, O* GOD: *I will render Praiſes unto thee.*] Nor will I ever be unmindful of the Promiſes I have made to thee, O GOD; to whom, when I was in Diſtreſs, I vowed the moſt grateful Acknowledgments, if thou wouldſt deliver me: Though I am not able to requite thy Kindneſs, yet I will not ceaſe to magnifie and extol it with my higheſt Praiſes.

Ver. 13. *For thou haſt delivered my Soul from Death:* wilt *not* thou deliver *my Feet from Falling, that I may walk before* GOD *in the Light of the living?*] For thou haſt ſo remarkably reſcued me from Death (to thy Goodneſs I aſcribe it, not to my Policy) when I was in the Power of the *Philiſtines*, that I ought not to doubt of thy continued Preſervation of me, from the Snares my Enemies lay to entrap me, or from the open Violence they uſe to overthrow me: Thou wilt ſupport me ſtill to praiſe thee, and to perform further Service to thee here in this World, as I intend to do moſt ſincerely.

PSALM LVII.

To the Chief Muſician. *Al-taſchith. Michtam* of *David*, when he fled from *Saul* in the Cave.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, the Title informs us, was penned upon the like Occaſion with the former. For after ſeveral other Wandrings, (beſides thoſe he ſpeaks of in the foregoing Pſalm, v. 8.) or Removes from Place to Place, mentioned 1 Sam. *XXIII. you find* David *in the ſtrong Holds of* E-ngedi, *v. 29. where there was a Cave among the Rocks, XXIV. 2, 3. in which* David *and his Men lurkt and hid themſelves for Fear of* Saul. *Who, in his Purſuit of them, came to eaſe himſelf in this very Place, where they skult; and thereby preſented* David *with as fair an Opportunity as could be deſired to kill him. Which he might have done without any Noiſe, if his Piety, and Religious Reſolution to do nothing that was ſinful, no not to gain a Kingdom; but (truſting to the faithful Promiſe he ſpeaks of,* Pſal. *LVII.* 4, 10.) *to wait wholly upon* GOD, *to prefer him when, and as he pleaſed, to the Throne, had not hinder'd him. For ſome of his Men, obſerving the Advantage, would fain have diſpatch'd him, if* David *had not forbidden the Perſon who was ready to ſtrike the Blow, ſaying,* Al-taſchith, Thou ſhalt not deſtroy *him*; or, deſtroy him not. *So ſome expound that Word, which we find in the Title of the* Pſalm; *though others (obſerving the ſame Word to be in the Title of the* two *following Pſalms, and of the LXXV. which belongeth not to this matter) judge it more probable that* Al-taſchith *was the Beginning of ſome Song, according to which this Pſalm was to be ſung. To which, notwithſtanding, in my Opinion, it may be replied, that thoſe* Three *Pſalms which follow after this, had that Title prefix'd, only to ſhow that they were to be ſung like this.*

In which David *commemorates* GOD's *great Mercy in mollifying the Heart of* Saul *at that time, by the Kindneſs and Piety which he expreſſed towards him: Remembring in the firſt place, what kind of Thoughts he had when he was in the Cave, and ſaw himſelf in manifeſt Danger*

of being taken by Saul's *Forces: And then bleſſing* God *for the ſudden Change which was made in his Condition, by* Saul's *falling into his Hand, to do what he pleaſed with him, by the Demonſtration he gave him, that he had no traiterous Thoughts in his Heart; but bare ſtill a due Reverence to him, notwithſtanding the ill Uſage he receiv'd from him.*

It is called Michtam, *for the ſame Reaſon that the former was, becauſe of the ſingular Favour which* God *ſhewed him in this Deliverance; more precious to him than any Jewel, and that deſerved an everlaſting Remembrance. (See* Pſal. *XVI.)*

Ver. 1. *BE merciful unto me, O* God, *be merciful unto me, for my Soul truſteth in thee: yea, in the Shadow of thy Wings will I make my Refuge, until* theſe *Calamities be overpaſt.*] O God, the Ruler and Governour of all the World, I moſt earneſtly beſeech thee to be merciful and gracious to me; O take ſome Pity upon me, who rely ſolely on thy Mercy, having no Confidence in theſe Fortreſſes, or ſecret Places, where I hide my ſelf; but truſting merely to thy Almighty Protection, on which I will ſtill depend, as I have done hitherto, for Defence and Preſervation, till this Danger be paſt, which is now impendent over me, and threatens to deſtroy me.

Ver. 2. *I will cry unto* God *moſt high: unto* God *that performeth* all Things *for me.*] There is none ſuperiour, or equal to him, unto whom I will continually commend my ſelf; unto that mighty God, who will finiſh, I hope, what he hath begun to do for me.

Ver. 3. *He ſhall ſend from Heaven, and ſave me* from *the Reproach of him that would ſwallow me up. Selah.* God *ſhall ſend forth his Mercy and his Truth.*] There are greater Armies in Heaven, than thoſe that here ſurround me; which, rather than I ſhall periſh, he will ſend for my Deliverance; he will expoſe him to Shame and Reproach, that gapes like a ravenous Beaſt to devour me: I doubt not of it; for beſides his infinite Mercy, I have his Promiſe for my Security; in the Performance of which, he will viſibly declare his Fidelity.

Ver. 4. *My Soul* is *among Lions*, and *I lie* even among *them that are ſet on Fire*, even *the Sons of Men, whoſe Teeth* are *Spears and Arrows, and their Tongues a ſharp Sword.*] And now there is a fit Opportunity, when my Life is in extreme Danger; for here I lie cloſe, and dare not ſtir, being encompaſs'd with Enemies pick'd out on purpoſe to deſtroy me, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 2.) who are as fierce and cruel as Lions, and enraged againſt me ſo furiouſly, that they are continually incenſing *Saul* to purſue me; tearing my good Name (as they hope to do me) in pieces, and giving the moſt deadly Wound to my Reputation, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. *v.* 9.)

Ver. 5. *Be thou exalted, O* God, *above the Heavens: let thy Glory be above all the Earth.*] Confute them, O God, the moſt righteous Judge of Mens Actions and Intentions; and by delivering me from this imminent Danger, raiſe to thy ſelf the higheſt Praiſes: and ſpread the Fame of thy glorious Power, Goodneſs, Wiſdom and Truth, throughout all the Earth.

Ver. 6. *They have prepared a Net for my Steps, my Soul is bowed down: they have digged a Pit before me, into the midſt whereof they are fallen* themſelves. *Selah.*] And how ready art thou to hear the Prayers of thy faithful Servant! For, after all their Projects and Devices to entrap me, when I was juſt falling into their Hands, I am miraculouſly preſerved; and they themſelves precipitouſly run into that very Danger, wherein they thought to have caught me, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 3, 4, 5, *&c.*

Ver. 7. *My Heart is fixed, O* God, *my Heart is fixed: I will ſing and give Praiſe.*] My Heart alſo is ready, O God, my Heart is prepared, and firmly reſolved to pay thee the Vows which I made in my Diſtreſs; my Song ſhall be of thee; and, with all the Joy I can expreſs, I will ſet forth thy Praiſe.

Ver. 8. *Awake up my Glory, awake Pſaltery and Harp: I* my ſelf *will awake early.*] My Tongue, wherewith I ought to glorifie thee, ſhall be no longer ſilent, or merely full of Complaints; nor ſhall any Inſtrument of Muſick be wanting to accompany my Hymns: which I will ſing unto thee ſo early, that I will prevent the riſing Sun.

Ver. 9. *I will praiſe thee, O* Lord, *among the People: I will ſing unto thee among the Nations.*] Nor will I content my ſelf with my private Acknowledgments of thy Goodneſs; but I will publiſh thy Praiſe in the greateſt Aſſemblies of thy People, among whom this Song ſhall be ſung; yea, other Nations ſhall read therein, how thankful I am to thee, for what thou haſt done.

Ver. 10. *For thy Mercy* is *great unto the Heavens, and thy Truth unto the Clouds.*] For it is fit my Thankfulneſs ſhould be as boundleſs as thy Mercy; which tranſcends all my Expreſſions; and hath nothing equal to it, but thy Faithfulneſs and Truth.

Ver. 11. *Be thou exalted, O* God, *above the Heavens: let thy Glory* be *above all the Earth.*] Be thou ſtill exalted in theſe, O God, and raiſe to thy ſelf thereby the higheſt Praiſe; ſpread the Fame of them every where, that thou mayeſt be glorified throughout all the World.

PSALM LVIII.

To the Chief Muſician. *Al taſchith. Michtam* of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This and the next Pſalm, in order of Time, precede the foregoing. But it is an ordinary Method among the Hebrews, *to go backward from the laſt to the firſt: as they ſeem to me to do very plainly, in theſe* three *Pſalms, which have the Title of* Al-taſchith. *For* David's *firſt Eſcape, when* Saul *ſent to kill him, was certainly the Occaſion of* Pſalm *LIX. And then* Saul *calling his Privy Council together, who without any more ado pronounced him guilty of High Treaſon: it is the Subject of this preſent Pſalm. And after that* Saul *perſecuted him with the greater Colour and Show of Juſtice, accuſing him of the worſt of Crimes; as he complains in many Places, particularly in the Pſalm foregoing. Which being called* Al-taſchith, *for a* pecu-

peculiar Reason, (see there.) This, when it was delivered to the Chief Musician, was appointed to be sung after the same manner with that, and had the same Name given it, with the Title of Michtam *also; because it contains a memorable Reproof of those Evil Counsellors, who, against their Conscience, had condemned* David, *merely to please the King, and give him a Pretence to destroy him. And therefore he prophesies a signal Vengeance should overtake them, (which he would have every body observe) and that so suddenly and dreadfully, that he compares it to the Mischief which a Whirlwind doth, when it carries all before it in a Moment: and particularly he remembers the Pots and Caldrons over the Fire, which should suffer by it; to intimate, I suppose, that these Men were great Oppressors, and devoured the People; as the Prophets often complain, in that very Language, particularly* Micah *III. 2, 3. where you read how the Senators of* Israel *broke the very Bones of the Poor, and chopt them in pieces, as for the Pot, and as Flesh within the Caldron. Which Place affords the best Explication that I can find of the* ninth *Verse of this Psalm. Where I take* hai *and* haron *to refer to Thorns, and render the former* green *or alive, the other* dry, *or scorcht and burnt. But whatsoever these Words signifie, the Repetition of* chemo *before each of them, plainly denotes (to any one that understands the* Hebrew *Language) that the Things meant by those Words should be served both alike.*

Ver. 1. *DO ye indeed speak Righteousness, O Congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye Sons of Men?*] From whom may we expect Justice, if not from the Princes and Rulers of the People, met together in Council? But let me ask that grave Assembly, do you verily think, that you have pronounced a righteous Sentence against me? Did you judge according to your Consciences, uprightly and sincerely; and not suffer your selves to be biassed by your Affections?

Ver. 2. *Yea, in Heart you work Wickedness: you weigh the Violence of your Hands in the Earth.*] You know the contrary to be true; and that you are not only disposed to do as the King would have you; but have Hearts fraught with Malice and wicked Devices against me: you that ought to weigh Things in an even Balance, and judge a Cause according to its Merits, suffer your selves to be inclined, by base Respects, to do an open Violence to your Country, and to oppress the Innocent.

Ver. 3. *The Wicked are estranged from the Womb, they go astray, as soon as they be born, speaking Lies.*] But it is no wonder I am thus used by a wicked Brood, who never had any Sense of God and Goodness; but were depraved from the very Womb: going astray, as soon as they could go: and telling Lies as soon as they could speak.

Ver. 4. *Their Poison is like the Poison of a Serpent; they are like the deaf Adder* that *stoppeth her Ear:*] And such is the Malignity of their venomous Nature, they tell the most malicious and destructive Lies of me; which strike at my Life as plainly, as if they were the Poison of a Serpent: whom they resemble in this also, that they will not be better instructed, nor, as becomes good Judges, keep an Ear open to further Information; but are as obstinate as the deaf Adder, (so much spoken of in our neighbouring Countries) which can hear well enough, but stops both her Ears:

Ver. 5. *Which will not hearken to the Voice of Charmers, charming never so wisely.* And will not listen to the magical Song, wherewith their cunning Men are wont to charm those Serpents; and draw them together out of their Holes.

Ver. 6. *Break their Teeth, O* God, *in their Mouth: break out the great Teeth of the young Lions, O* Lord.] I appeal therefore from them, unto thee, O God, the most righteous Judge; beseeching thee to disable those Mens Forces, whose Wickedness is incorrigible: Though they be as strong and terrible, as fierce and ravenous as the young Lions, thou, O Lord, who art superiour to all, canst easily disarm them; and leave them a Desire, without any Power to do me Mischief.

Ver. 7. *Let them melt away,* as *Waters* which *run continually:* When *he bendeth* his Bow to shoot *his Arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.*] Or if they have any Strength remaining, let their Courage fail them when they would attempt any Thing against me: Let them be dissipated like Waters which slide away: When *Saul* bends his Mind to do me any Harm, let him miss his Aim; like him that shoots a broken Arrow out of his Bow.

Ver. 8. *As a Snail* which *melteth, let* every one *of them pass away* like *the untimely Birth of a Woman,* that *they may not see the Sun.*] Or be like a Snail, that appears with a threatning Look when it puts forth its Horns; but the farther it goes, the more it wastes and spends it self: whatsoever Designs he and his Followers may have to destroy me, let them all miscarry, and prove like an abortive Child, which dies in the Womb, and never sees the Light of this World.

Ver. 9. *Before your Pots can feel the Thorns, he shall take them away as with a Whirlwind, both living, and in* his *Wrath.*] O ye unrighteous Judges; who, instead of preserving the People, devour and eat them up: God shall hurry you away suddenly, as in a furious Tempest; which before your Flesh-pots can feel the Thorns, carries them all away, both the green Thorns and the dry.

Ver. 10. *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the Vengeance: he shall wash his Feet in the Blood of the Wicked:*] Which just Judgment of God, when innocent People, whom you have oppressed, shall behold, it will fill them with Joy; yea, they shall triumph over these wicked Men, like a great Conqueror; who returning with an absolute and complete Victory from the Slaughter of his Enemies, dips his Feet in their Blood, as he passes over their Carcases.

Ver. 11. *So that a Man shall say, Verily* there *is a Reward for the Righteous: verily he is a* God *that judgeth in the Earth.*] And the most vulgar People, who observe little, seeing so remarkable a Vengeance, shall confess and say, Surely it is best to be just and pious: surely there is a Supreme Judge, whatsoever profane Men imagine, who takes Notice of all that is done upon Earth,

Earth, and puniſhes or rewards Men according to their Deſerts.

PSALM LIX.

To the Chief Muſician. *Al-taſchith. Michtam* of *David:* when *Saul* ſent, and they watched the Houſe to kill him.

ARGUMENT.

The Title ſufficiently informs us of the Occaſion of this Pſalm, wherein David *expreſſes what his Thoughts and Affections were, when* Saul *ſent Officers to watch his Houſe all Night; and to ſlay him when he came out of his Doors in the Morning: as you may read* 1 Sam. *XIX. from v.* 11, *to v.* 18. *He repreſents his Danger; beſeeches* God's *Protection; deſcribes the Wickedneſs of his Enemies, and their Diligence to deſtroy him; commends himſelf to* God; *expreſſes his Confidence in him; and at laſt gratefully acknowledges* God's *Goodneſs, who, by the Kindneſs of his Wife, preſerved him from this Danger. Which was ſo great, and the Deliverance from it ſo remarkable, that he would have it commemorated in this Pſalm. Which is therefore called* Michtam, *(ſee Pſalm XVI.) and was ſent to the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle, to be ſung as the two former, which have the Name of* Al-taſchith. *See Pſal. LVII.*

Ver. 1. *Deliver me from mine Enemies, O my* God: *defend me from them that riſe up againſt me.*] O God, who haſt hitherto graciouſly preſerved me, (ſee 1 *Sam.* XIX. 10.) take me now into thy Protection, and deliver me from this great Danger: Thou ſeeſt the Number and the Power of my Enemies, who are riſen up to deſtroy me; be thou my Defence, I beſeech thee; and bring me into ſome Place of Safety, where they may not be able to reach me.

Ver. 2. *Deliver me from the Workers of Iniquity, and ſave me from bloody Men.*] Reſcue me from the Malice of Men, whoſe Buſineſs and conſtant Employment it is to do wickedly: Save me from the Cruelty of thoſe, whom nothing but my Blood will ſatisfie.

Ver. 3. *For lo, they lie in wait for my Soul; the mighty are gathered againſt me; not* for *my Tranſgreſſion, nor* for *my Sin, O* Lord.] For lo, a ſtrong Guard hath beſet my Houſe, and lies in wait to apprehend me, and take away my Life: though I have committed no Offence againſt them, either great or leſs, as thou, O Lord, from whom nothing can be hid, very well knoweſt.

Ver. 4. *They run and prepare themſelves without* my *Fault: awake to help me, and behold.*] Unprovoked by me, (I dare again repeat it, ſo great is my Innocence) they very buſily run to and fro, and with all Diligence diſpoſe their Watch in every Place to hinder my Eſcape: O that thou wouldſt therefore ſeaſonably interpoſe for my Succour, and conſider the Danger of my Condition.

Ver. 5. *Thou therefore, O* Lord God *of Hoſts, the* God *of Iſrael, awake to viſit all the Heathen: be not merciful to any wicked Tranſgreſſours. Selah.*] What is all their Power and Force to thine? Who art the Sovereign Lord of the World, and commandeſt all the Hoſts in Heaven and Earth; and haſt made alſo a gracious Covenant with thy People, to protect and defend them: Appear now for my Relief, and puniſh all thoſe wicked Men, who call themſelves thy People, but are as barbarous and cruel, as falſe and perfidious as the Heathen: Do not ſpare them therefore, nor ſhew any Favour to ſuch as violate all the Laws of Juſtice and Charity, and keep no Faith with their Neighbours.

Ver. 6. *They return at Evening; they make a Noiſe like a Dog, and go round about the City.*] After I had eſcaped the Fury of *Saul* in the Day, he renews his Attempts in the Evening; and ſends armed Men to apprehend me; (1 *Sam.* XIX. 10, 11.) ſome of which lie about my Houſe, ready, like a growling Dog, to ſeize upon me; and others (ſhould they miſs me there) go round about the City, to way-lay me in every Corner.

Ver. 7. *Behold, they belch out with their Mouth: Swords* are *in their Lips; for who,* ſay they, *doth hear?*] Behold, how full their Hearts are of Malice! which burſts out at their Mouth: they openly threaten to kill me, (1 *Sam.* XIX. 15.) for who, ſay they, ſhall call them to any Account for it, when they have diſpatched me?

Ver. 8. *But thou, O* Lord, *ſhalt laugh at them; thou ſhalt have all the Heathen in Deriſion.*] Thou, O Lord, art not in their Thoughts, who wilt ſo diſappoint them in their Deſigns, as to make them very ridiculous: Thou wilt expoſe all theſe Paganiſh People to the Scorn and Deriſion of thoſe who ſee how they are defeated, (1 *Sam.* XIX. 16.)

Ver. 9. Becauſe of *his Strength will I wait upon thee: for* God *is my Defence.*] For what is the Strength of *Saul* to thee? on whom I will wait with the ſame Diligence, that they watch for me: knowing that I am ſafer under God's Protection, than if my Houſe were an impregnable Tower.

Ver. 10. *The* God *of my Mercy ſhall prevent me;* God *ſhall let me ſee* my Deſire *upon mine Enemies.*] He who hath given me ſo many Demonſtrations of his Love, will not now deſert me; but make way for my timely Eſcape, notwithſtanding all their Diligence to apprehend me: Let them obſerve me as cloſely as they can, God will let me behold their Diſappointment.

Ver. 11. *Slay them not, leſt my People forget: ſcatter them by thy Power, and bring them down, O* Lord *our Shield.*] Not that I deſire they ſhould all be ſlain at one Stroke, which, though a terrible Vengeance, might ſoon ſlip out of my Countrymens Mind; whoſe Profit I deſire, more than my own private Revenge: And therefore wiſh rather thou wouldſt employ thy Power, O Lord our Protector, firſt to depoſe them from their Honour and High Place; and having laid them low, and made them contemptible, then to diſperſe them here and there, and make them wander up and down as Vagabonds; that they may remain every where publick Spectacles of thy juſt Diſpleaſure.

Ver. 12. For *the Sin of their Mouth,* and *the Words of their Lips, let them even be taken in their Pride: and for curſing and Lying,* which

they

they speak.] The Falshoods and Calumnies which their Mouths continually utter, deserve this Vengeance; which shall certainly come upon them; for, tho' they may thrive by this means for the present, yet at last these very Artifices shall prove their Ruin: especially since they are so arrogant and audacious, as to dare to forswear themselves, and to confirm their Forgeries with Oaths and horrid Execrations.

Ver. 13. *Consume* them *in Wrath, consume* them, *that they may not be: and let them know that* God *ruleth in Jacob, unto the Ends of the Earth. Selah.*] Let such vile Wretches as these, who incense thy just Displeasure against them after this manner, be utterly consumed: let them wast away by degrees in their Dispersions, till there be none of them found: that they may be convinced there is a Supreme Being, and most Righteous Judge, who governs all things; and controls even Kings themselves, not only among us, but throughout the World.

Ver. 14. *And at Evening let them return, and let them make a Noise like a Dog, and go round about the City.*] Let them therefore watch me now, as narrowly as they please, (*v.* 7.) lying near my House, like a Dog, ready to seize upon me; or hunting about the City every where, to apprehend me.

Ver. 15. *Let them wander up and down for Meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.*] They shall be punished in their kind, and go up and down the City and Country hereafter, upon another Design: wandring, like a hungry Dog, from Door to Door, to get something to eat; and forced to pass whole Nights in Complaints, for want of Satisfaction.

Ver. 16. *But I will sing of thy Power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy Mercy in the Morning: for thou hast been my Defence and Refuge in the Day of my Trouble.*] Whilst I (whom they thought to have devoured) am praising thy Power, as I intend to do continually; I will get up early, to give thee the highest Praises for thy Mercy (as I did that Morning when I had escaped the Hands of those that watched for me) because thou didst so mightily defend me, and take me into thy gracious Protection; when I was in such a Strait, that without thy miraculous Mercy I must have perished.

Ver. 17. *Unto thee, O my Strength, will I sing: for* God *is my Defence,* and *the* God *of my Mercy.*] It is but just that I should praise thee (who didst inspire me with Strength and Courage) with the same Diligence that I prayed to thee, against the Power of *Saul*, (v. 9.) For, whosoever was the Instrument, it was God that brought me into a Place of Safety; that God, who hath been most merciful to me, and tied me unto him by innumerable Benefits.

PSALM LX.

To the Chief Musician upon *Shushan Eduth, Michtam* of *David* to teach; when he strove with *Aram-naharaim*, and with *Aram-zobah*; when *Joab* returned, and smote of *Edom*, in the Valley of *Salt*, twelve thousand.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, we learn by the Title, was penned by David *after* Saul's *Persecution was ended by Death, and* David *not only ruled over* Judah, *but* Israel *also. Till which Time the* Philistines *and other Nations afflicted the Country very much, by reason of the Divisions there were between the two Kingdoms of* Israel *and* Judah: *as they had done also all the Days of* Saul, *while he was busying himself in pursuing his Hatred against* David; *and neglected his foreign Enemies so much, that the* Philistines *were too hard for him, and at last overthrew him, in that great Battle wherein he and his Sons were slain,* 1 Sam. *XXXI. But when* David *was come to the Crown, and both Kingdoms also united in him,* God *himself seemed to lift up an Ensign to them, (as he speaks here,* v. 4.) *to call them to resort with one Consent unto* David, *in assured Hope of Victory over their Enemies. Accordingly he subdued the* Philistines, *as you read* 2 Sam. *VIII.* 1. *(which Chapter must be read for the understanding of this Psalm) and after that smote the* Moabites, v. 2. *of that Chapter; and then, in a memorable Battle (particularly taken Notice of in the Title of this Psalm) overthrew the* Syrians, *called here and in other Places* Aram: *Both those that lived between the two Rivers* Tigris *and* Euphrates, *called* Naharaim; *and those that adjoined to them, in that Part of* Syria, *called* Zobah, v. 3, &c.

And returning from this Victory, after his Lieutenant General Abishai *had slain of the* Edomites *eighteen thousand, (*2 Sam. *VIII.* 13. 1 Chron. *XVIII.* 12.) Joab, *the General of all his Forces, fell upon them again, and killed in the same Place, the Valley of* Salt, *twelve thousand more (as the Title of this Psalm informs us), and afterwards destroyed them intirely, leaving never a Male-Child, that he could find, remaining,* 1 Kings *XI.* 15, 16.

For all which Expeditions when David *was preparing himself, he composed this Psalm, and delivered it to the Master of Musick in the Tabernacle; to be sung upon an Instrument of six Strings, which was wont to be used in solemn Thanksgivings (and therefore called* Shushan-eduth). *For he nothing doubted, but* God *would prosper his Arms, better than he had done* Saul's: *and both give him the Victory over their Forces in the Field, and bring him also into their fortified Cities,* v. 9. *as we read he did,* 2 Sam. *VIII.* 14. *Which made this Psalm also be called* Michtam *of* David, *(see Psalm. XVI.) being a most precious Memorial, worthy to be ever preserved, of his Faith in* God, *and of the admirable Success of it; whereby Posterity should learn to trust in him.*

Ver. 1. O God, *thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased, O turn thy self to us again.*] O God, the Judge of all the World, who hast lately rejected us, and refused to go out with our Armies; who hast broken and scattered our Forces, (1 *Sam.* XXXI. 1, 7.) so highly had our Sins provoked

thy Diſpleaſure; I moſt humbly beſeech thee, to return to us with thy Favour, and make us as proſperous as we have been unſucceſsful.

Ver. 2. *Thou haſt made the Earth to tremble; thou haſt broken it: heal the Breaches thereof, for it ſhaketh.*] There have been dreadful Commotions among our ſelves, and miſerable Rents and Diviſions, (2 *Sam.* II. 9, 10, 17. III. 1.) the woful Effects of which remain to this Day; and call for thy Help: who alone canſt repair the Breaches our Folly hath made; and perfect the Union which is begun.

Ver. 3. *Thou haſt ſhewed thy People hard Things: thou haſt made us to drink the Wine of Aſtoniſhment.*] Thou haſt made us feel what it is to offend thee, by inflicting grievous Puniſhments upon us; wherein thou haſt fulfilled the Words of thy Servant *Moſes*: (*Deut.* XXVIII. 18, 34.) for we have been like to Men bereft of the Uſe of their Reaſon, by ſome intoxicating Potion; and have madly deſtroyed one another.

Ver. 4. *Thou haſt given a Banner to them that fear thee: that it may be diſplayed becauſe of the Truth. Selah.*] But now thou haſt granted the Deſires of thoſe that devoutly worſhip thee, and, according to thy faithful Promiſe, (2 *Sam.* III. 9, 18.) given me to them to be their King; to whom they ſhould all repair, as Soldiers do to their Enſign when it is lifted up, and unanimouſly fight againſt their Enemies under my Conduct.

Ver. 5. *That thy beloved may be delivered; ſave* with *thy right Hand, and hear me.*] Which I beſeech thee to bleſs and proſper; that by thy mighty Power accompanying my Arms, I may be an Inſtrument of delivering thy beloved People from thoſe that have oppreſſed them.

Ver. 6. God *hath ſpoken in his Holineſs, I will rejoice: I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth.*] Why ſhould I doubt of it? And not rather rejoice in aſſur'd Hope of Victory; ſince God, who is moſt holy, and cannot lie, hath ſaid, He will deliver them by my Hand, (2 *Sam.* III. 18.) and hath already put me in Poſſeſſion (as he alſo promiſed, *v.* 2.) of all the Country about *Samaria*; which I will diſtribute under ſuch Officers, as I think fit to ſet over them.

Ver. 7. *Gilead* is *mine, and Manaſſeh* is *mine, Ephraim alſo* is *the Strength of mine Head; Judah* is *my Law-giver.*] *Gilead* alſo and *Manaſſeh*, who were lately under another King, (2 *Sam.* II. 9.) have ſubmitted themſelves unto me; and ſo hath the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which is a main Support of my Authority: Theſe and all the reſt of the Tribes of *Iſrael* are now united to the Royal Tribe of *Judah*, which (according to the Word of our Fore-father, *Gen.* XLIX. 10.) ſupplies me with wiſe and able Men to adminiſter the Laws, and order the Affairs of my Kingdom.

Ver. 8. *Moab* is *my Waſh-pot, over Edom will I caſt out my Shoe: Philiſtia, triumph thou becauſe of me.*] Which ſhall now extend it ſelf beyond the Bounds of this Country; for I will tread *Moab* under my Feet, and reduce them to the vileſt Servitude, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 2.) I will trample alſo upon the *Edomites*, and make them my Slaves, (*ib.* v. 14.) The *Philiſtines* likewiſe, whom I have begun to ſmite, (2 *Sam.* V. 17, *&c.* 22, *&c.*) ſhall add to my Triumphs, and be forced to meet me as their conquering Lord. (2 *Sam.* VIII. 1.)

Ver. 9. *Who will bring me* into *the ſtrong City? who will lead me into Edom?*] Theſe are difficult Things indeed; and I may well ask, when I conſider how potent theſe Nations are, by what Power or Force ſhall I enter that ſtrongly fenced City, in the Frontiers of their Country? Who is it that will conduct me into *Idumæa*, and make me Maſter of it?

Ver. 10. *Wilt not thou, O* God, which *hadſt caſt us off? and thou, O* God, *which didſt not go out with our Armies?*] But I can ſoon anſwer my ſelf; for why ſhould I deſpair of thy Preſence with us, O God of all Power and Might? Who formerly indeed didſt reject us, and forſake the Conduct of our Armies; but now, I hope, wilt graciouſly aid us, and make us victorious.

Ver. 11. *Give us Help from Trouble: for vain* is *the Help of Man.*] Do not fruſtrate theſe Hopes; but afford us thy Help againſt the *Syrians* alſo, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 5.) now that they diſtreſs us; for no humane Force is able to deliver us, nor have we any Confidence in it, but in thee alone.

Ver. 12. *Through* God *we ſhall do valiantly: for he it is* that *ſhall tread down our Enemies.*] By whoſe Aſſiſtance we will behave our ſelves couragiouſly, and do valiant Acts; for God will utterly rout our Enemies, and tread them down like Mire in the Streets.

PSALM LXI.

To the Chief Muſician upon *Neginoth.* A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

All agree that in the Beginning of this Pſalm David *relates what his Thoughts were, when he fled either from* Saul, *or from his Son* Abſalom; *who drove him over* Jordan, *as far as* Mahanaim, *the very Extremity of* Judæa. *Of this latter, it is moſt probable, he complains here,* v. 2. *becauſe afterward he calls himſelf King,* v. 6. *which he would not have done during the Life of* Saul, *tho' he was anointed and deſigned by* God *to that high Dignity; becauſe nothing could have juſtified* Saul's *Perſecution of him ſo much as his taking upon him that Title. It may be ſaid indeed, that he kept this Pſalm private till he was poſſeſſed of the Kingdom, and then deliver'd it to the Chief Muſician, to be ſung as Pſal.* IV. *But that will not ſeem ſo likely, when we conſider that his Danger was over before he had finiſhed this Pſalm, and called himſelf a King; as appears from the latter Part of it, beginning* v. 5. *Where, after a Pauſe, he begins to acknowledge how* God *had granted the Deſires he made when he was in Diſtreſs; and thankfully commemorates his Mercy, in bringing him back again to his Tabernacle: hoping he would prolong his Life in the Throne, (v.* 6.) *to which he was newly either advanced, or reſtor'd by* God's *Goodneſs. I ſhall ſuppoſe the latter in my* Paraphraſe.

Ver. 1. *Hear my Cry, O* God, *attend unto my Prayer.*] O God, the Supreme Governour and Judge of all the World, graciouſly vouchſafe to admit and anſwer the Petitions of a

poor

poor Supplicant; who in a most lamentable Condition, cries unto thee most earnestly for Relief.

Ver. 2. *From the end of the Earth will I cry unto thee, when my Heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.*] Of which I will not despair, though I am upon the Brink of being thrust out of my Kingdom, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 22, 24.) and in such Anxiety of Mind, that I am even overwhelmed with Fear, and Grief, and Care; still I cry unto thee, saying, Secure me, I beseech thee, and bring me into a Place of Safety; which as without thee I am not able to reach, so there my Enemies may not be able to approach me.

Ver. 3. *For thou hast been a Shelter for me, and a strong Tower from the Enemy.*] For in all my Distresses hitherto, thou hast been pleased wonderfully to preserve me: I fled to thee, and was protected, as in an impregnable Fortress, when *Saul* sought to destroy me.

Ver. 4. *I will abide in thy Tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the Covert of thy Wings. Selah.*] Which makes me hope thou wilt restore me again to the Place where thou dwellest; and that I shall never be thus banished from it any more, but remain in Safety under thy Almighty Protection, in which I will put my entire Confidence.

Ver. 5. *For thou, O* God, *hast heard my Vows: thou hast given* me *the Heritage of those that fear thy Name.*] And since thou, O God, hast heard the Prayers, which with these Vows I made unto thee; and hast given me again the Possession of that Countrey, which is the Inheritance of thy faithful People:

Ver. 6. *Thou wilt prolong the King's Life:* and *his Years as many Generations.*] I doubt not but thou wilt grant their King a long and prosperous Reign over them, and add so many Years to those which his Enemies would have cut off: as if thou hadst given him a new Life, and added another Age unto the former.

Ver. 7. *He shall abide before* God *for ever: O prepare Mercy and Truth* which *may preserve him.*] He shall sit upon his Throne, and ever govern in the Fear of God: O that thy Goodness and Faithfulness, which are a stronger Guard than all his military Forces, may be ever ready at Hand to defend him.

Ver. 8. *So will I sing Praise unto thy Name for ever, that I may daily perform my Vows.*] So will I perpetually sing Psalms in Praise of them; and learn thereby to be faithful to my Promises: and Day by Day perform the Vows which I made unto thee when I was in Trouble.

PSALM LXII.

To the Chief Musician, to *Jeduthun.* A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

There are no Petitions at all in this Psalm, nor any Thanksgivings: but only Expressions of David's *Faith and Confidence in* God. *Which (notwithstanding the Straits he was in, as appears from v. 3, 4.) grew greater and stronger (compare v. 2. with v. 6.) and moved him to earnest Exhortations of all other Persons, never to trust in Men; much less in those wicked Arts of fraudulent Dealing and Robbery, whereby Men are wont to advance themselves to great Estates; hoping thereby to be so strong, that no Body dare meddle with them: but to place all their Confidence in* God *alone, who can and will make those Supports fail those that rely upon them; and bless the Piety of such Men as depend wholly upon him.*

Which would make one think this Psalm was penned by him, when he had overcome all the Fears into which the Rebellion of Absalom *at first put him; but yet was not restored to his Kingdom. Unto which when he returned, he committed this Meditation to the Master of the Musick, to be sung according to the Tune to which* Jeduthun, *a famous Artist, had set the XXXIX. Psalm.*

Ver. 1. *Truly my Soul waiteth upon* God: *from him* cometh *my Salvation.*] Let the Dangers be never so great which threaten my Destruction, I am resolved quietly and patiently to commit my self to God; expecting what he will be pleased to do for me, who alone is able to deliver me.

Ver. 2. *He only* is *my Rock and my Salvation:* he is *my Defence, I shall not be greatly moved.*] Be my Enemies never so powerful, I doubt not by his Providence to be safe; so secure, that though they give me some Disturbance, they shall not be able to do it long, much less to throw me quite out of my Throne.

Ver. 3. *How long will ye imagine Mischief against a Man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing Wall* shall ye be, and as *a tottering Fence.*] I wonder at your Obstinacy, who continue thus to contrive the Ruin of a Man, whom God hath so visibly declared that he favours: To what Purpose are all your Conspiracies, but only to bring sudden Destruction upon your selves? For you shall all perish in this Enterprize, and fall to the Ground, like a Wall that is not evenly built; or like a Partition made only of loose Stones, that have no Mortar to cement and hold them fast together.

Ver. 4. *They only consult to cast* him *down from his Excellency, they delight in Lyes: they bless with their Mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.*] It is plain what they design, and whither all their Consultations tend; to dethrone him whom God hath been pleased to advance to the highest Dignity: This they hope now to effect by Lyes and Calumnies; in which they please themselves, as formerly they did in Fawning and Flattery: speaking fairly to me with their Mouth, when in their Heart they wish'd my utter Ruin, (See *Psal.* LV. 21.)

Ver. 5. *My Soul wait thou only upon* God: *for my Expectation* is *from him.*] But let not this discourage thee, O my Soul; resolve still to wait upon God with Quietness and Patience: for from him I expect my Deliverance.

Ver. 6. *He only* is *my Rock and my Salvation:* he is *my Defence, I shall not be moved.*] By his Providence, as I said before, I doubt not I shall be so safe, so secure, that do what they can, they shall not be able to take one Step more, to throw me out of my Throne.

Ver. 7. *In* God *is my Salvation, and my Glory:*

the

the Rock of my Strength, and my Refuge is *in* God.] Both my Safety, and my Honour and Dignity, depends upon God alone; and not upon their Will and Pleasure: And I trust not either in Fortresses or Armies, but make him my Confidence, on whom I rely for Defence and Protection against the strongest Enemies.

Ver. 8. *Trust in him at all Times, ye People, pour out your Heart before him:* God *is a Refuge for us. Selah.*] And so I would advise all my People to do continually, in whatsoever Condition you be, repose a pious Confidence in him: be not fearful, nor too sollicitous; but commit your selves to God by earnest Prayer, and implore his Help; for he will never fail us.

Ver. 9. *Surely Men of low Degree are Vanity,* and *Men of high Degree* are *a Lye: to be laid in the Balance, they are altogether lighter than Vanity.*] But do not place any Confidence in Man; for as the Multitude are vain, giddy, and unconstant; so the greater Sort are false, deceitful, and treacherous: Take them altogether, they are no more to be depended on than the vainest Thing in the World; which, thrown into the Balance against them, will prove more solid and ponderous.

Ver. 10. *Trust not in Oppression, and become not vain in Robbery: if Riches increase, set not your Heart* upon them.] And do not by any Means, when all humane Helps may fail you, betake your selves to Frauds, Cheating and Calumnies, for Support; much less endeavour to inrich your selves by Rapine, Spoil and Robbery. Be not so vain as to trust to ill-gotten Goods; for if your Riches increase by honest Means, they are not Things wherein to place either your Confidence and Hope, or your Love and Joy.

Ver. 11. God *hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that Power* belongeth *unto* God.] For God hath frequently declared, in the Course of his Providence, as well as in his Word; I my self have been Witness of it more than once; that by his Power he disposes Things quite otherways than Men project; dashing all their worldly Confidences in Pieces, and especially defeating the Hopes of those that think to prosper in evil Courses:

Ver. 12. *Also unto thee,* O Lord, belongeth *Mercy: for thou rendrest to every Man according to his Work.*] And that thou, O Lord, art also exceeding gracious to those that piously trust in thee; preserving and providing for them, when they are destitute of humane Succour: for thou art not an idle Spectator of Mens Actions, nor acceptest any Man's Person; but an exact Dispenser of Rewards and Punishments, to every Man according to his Work.

PSALM LXIII.

A Psalm of *David*, when he was in the Wilderness of *Judah*.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the Title informs us, represents the Thoughts which David *had when he was in the Wilderness of* Judah. *But whether by that he meant the Forest of* Hareth, *wherein, after other Places, he secured himself when he fled from* Saul: (1 Sam. *XXII.* 5.) *or the Wilderness he went through, when he fled from* Absalom, (2 Sam. *XVII.* 29.) *may be questioned.* Theodoret *takes it for the former, but I incline to the latter, for the same Reason I gave before; because he calls himself a King, v.* 11. *which he would not have done, as I said (upon Psal. LXI.) during the Reign of* Saul; *because it would have given him too just Cause to persecute him; and made the People look upon him as a Traitor. Unless we say that he did not publish this Psalm, but reserve it for his own private Use, till he came to the Kingdom. When he delivered it to the Chief Musician, for the Service of the Tabernacle: where he longed very much to be, when he was in his Banishment. As appears by this Psalm, in which he expresses exceeding great Love to* God, *(as* Theodoret *notes) and predicts the Destruction of his Enemies.*

Ver. 1. O God, *thou art my* God, *early will I seek thee: my Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is:*] O God, the Governour of the World, who hast ever been my gracious God, and art my only Confidence; to thee I early direct my Morning Thoughts, most earnestly beseeching thee to take Pity upon me, in this desolate Condition: wherein I languish, and am ready to faint, as I travel through this dry and tiresome Wilderness, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 29.) where there is no Water to refresh me,

Ver. 2. *To see thy Power, and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.*] It is not so much some Satisfaction to my Hunger and Thirst, that I desire, as to be restored again to worship thee before the Ark of thy Presence; (2 *Sam.* XV. 25.) which is the Token of thy Power and Majesty residing among us: and there to enjoy thee, as I have done heretofore; when I had the Liberty to go into thy Sanctuary.

Ver. 3. *Because thy Loving-kindness* is *better than Life, my Lips shall praise thee.*] My Lips shall then praise thee with the same Devotion that I now pray unto thee: for nothing is so dear unto me, as thy Favour and Love; without which, Life it self, and all the Pleasures of my Court, would be of little Value.

Ver. 4. *Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my Hands in thy Name.*] The greatest Pleasure of my Life shall be continually to bless thee for such a happy Restauration: and with the most thankful Acknowledgments for what thou hast done for me, to implore thy future Kindness towards me.

Ver. 5. *My Soul shall be satisfied as* with *Marrow and Fatness: and my Mouth shall praise* thee *with joyful Lips:*] My hungry Appetite would not now receive greater Satisfaction, if the best Chear in the World was presented to me; than my Soul shall be filled withal in that sweet Imployment: when with the highest Expressions of Joy, my Mouth shall, with a loud Voice, sing thy Praises.

Ver. 6. *When I remember thee upon my Bed,* and *meditate on thee in the* Night *watches.*] Mean Time I comfort my self with the Hope of that Happiness; calling to Mind, as I lie upon my Bed, and seriously considering as oft as I awake, how gracious thou hast been unto me.

Ver.

Ver. 7. *Because thou hast been my Help: therefore in the Shadow of thy Wings will I rejoice.*] From whence I conclude, that since thou hast relieved me in my greatest Straits, I shall be safe under thy Almighty Protection; and at last triumph over all my Enemies.

Ver. 8. *My Soul followeth hard after thee: thy right Hand upholdeth me.*] Though thou seemest to cast me off, my Soul notwithstanding cleaveth fast unto thee; and will not part with its Hope in thee: And I feel the happy Fruit of it, for by thy mighty Aid I am supported and preserved from sinking under these sore Calamities that have lain upon me.

Ver. 9. *But those* that *seek my Soul to destroy it, shall go into the lower Parts of the Earth.*] Which now shall fall upon those that endeavour to destroy me: who seeking to take away my Life, shall lose their own, (2 *Sam.* XVIII. 7, 8, *&c.*)

Ver. 10. *They shall fall by the Sword: they shall be a Portion for Foxes.*] They shall perish by the Sword; and their Carcases have no other Sepulchres but in the Bowels of Foxes, and other such like ravenous Creatures, who live as they do by Stealth and Deceit.

Ver. 11. *But the King shall rejoice in* GOD; *every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the Mouth of them that speak Lyes shall be stopped.*] But I their Sovereign shall be filled with Joy; and so shall all pious Men, who preserved their Loyalty, and would by no Means violate their Oath, wherein they stood engaged to me: They shall triumph when my Calumniators, (2 *Sam.* XV. 2, 3.) and all perfidious Persons, shall be so silenced, that they shall not have a Word to say for themselves.

PSALM LXIV.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Enemy, of whom David *here complains, it is most probable was* Saul: *whose Hatred to him was very much heightned, and made more malignant, by the Calumnies and false Stories which were told of him by some ill Men in his Court: Who were always plotting and contriving in their Cabals, (as we speak) how to compass his Destruction (and found no Means more effectual for that End than Lyes and Calumnies) though, in Truth, they were all that Time (as he foretold) devising their own. In Memory of which he delivered this Psalm, together with several other, (which he made on the same Subject) to the Master of Musick, to be sung in the Tabernacle.*

Ver. 1. HEAR *my Voice,* O GOD, *in my Prayer; preserve my Life from Fear of the Enemy.*] O GOD, the Governour of all the World, who seest the Danger I am in by a dreadful Enemy; be thou my Friend, I humbly beseech thee; and preserve the Life of thy persecuted Servant, who by earnest Prayer commends himself unto thy Custody.

Ver. 2. *Hide me from the secret Counsel of the wicked: from the Insurrection of the Workers of Iniquity:*] Protect me from the secret Plots, and the open Violence of those wicked Men: who make a great Stir against me, and unjustly seek my Ruin.

Ver. 3. *Who whet their Tongue like a Sword,* and *bend* their Bows to shoot *their Arrows,* even *bitter Words.*] Their Tongue is their principal Weapon; which they have in Readiness (as Soldiers have their Swords) upon all Occasions, to wound my Reputation: Calumnies and Slanders, like so many poisoned Arrows, are ever at their Tongues end.

Ver. 4. *That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.*] Which, when they are in private with *Saul,* they shoot at me; who never did him or them any wrong; but am perfectly guiltless of that which they charge me withal: yet I find these false Accusations, which I never expected, spread abroad by those who have no Fear of GOD to restrain them from doing Mischief to their innocent Neighbours.

Ver. 5. *They encourage themselves in an evil Matter: they commune of laying Snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?*] They use their utmost Endeavours to make their Calumnies be believed, and confirm one another in their resolved Prosecution of their wicked Design: which they consult how to effect, though it be by Falshood and Treachery, or by Wiles and crafty Practices, so subtilly contrived, that no Body, they hope, shall be able to discover them.

Ver. 6. *They search out Iniquities, they accomplish a diligent Search: both the inward* Thought *of every one of them, and the Heart* is *deep.*] They employ all their Wit and Diligence in these wicked Devices: and leave nothing unattempted to produce the most exquisite and absolute Piece of Villany that can be invented by Men of the deepest Reach and Policy.

Ver. 7. *But* GOD *shall shoot at them* with *an Arrow: suddenly shall they be wounded.*] But all to no Purpose; for when they little think of it, they and all their Projects shall perish, by a sudden Stroke of the Divine Vengeance.

Ver. 8. *So they shall make their own Tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.*] Their Slanders shall reflect upon themselves; and their wicked Counsels prove so pernicious to those that gave them, that they shall be forsaken even of their Friends; and they that were wont to visit them, shall fly away from them.

Ver. 9. *And all Men shall fear, and shall declare the Work of* GOD; *for they shall wisely consider of his Doing.*] And all other Men shall be afraid to imitate them; not being able to deny the just Vengeance of GOD, the Judge of all, upon them: for they shall be convinced, that it was not by Chance, but by his Counsel, that they were not only defeated, but insnared in their own Contrivances.

Ver. 10. *The righteous shall be glad in the* LORD, *and shall trust in him; and all the upright in Heart shall glory.*] Which shall both fill my Heart, whom they unjustly maligned, with such Joy in the LORD, as shall encourage me to commit my self unto him for ever in well-doing; and make all true Lovers of Piety triumph in the Victory, which Integrity and Simplicity hath gotten over Falshood and Subtilty.

PSALM LXV.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm and Song of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

The latter Part of this excellent Hymn of Praise (as the Title calls it; see more Psal. *LXVII.) hath moved some judicious Interpreters to think, that it was delivered by* David *to the Master of Musick, after some great Drought; which had brought, or threatned to bring a Dearth upon the Land: And there are those who imagine it relates to the* three *Years Famine, after the Rebellion of* Absalom, 2 Sam. *XXI. which being removed by plentiful Showers of Rain, the Psalmist gives* God *publick Thanks in this Hymn, for sending them seasonably to his People; whom he had formerly obliged by several other great Benefits, as he doth all other Nations; which* David *here first of all commemorates.*

I can find nothing more probable than this. For as to the Title which we find in the vulgar Latin, *out of some* Greek *Copies, that it is a* Psalm sung by *Jeremy* and *Ezekiel*, with the People of the Captivity, when they were about to go into, or come out of it; *(I know not well which they mean) there is no Sense that I can see to be made of it. For* Jeremiah *was not carried Captive, as* Theodoret *observes but left at Liberty to go whither he pleased; and* Ezekiel *was gone long before; nor are there any such Words, as the same* Theodoret *notes, to be found either in the Hebrew, or in other Interpreters; no, not in the LXX. which was in the* Hexaplus. *But some Body, who neither attended to the Sense of the Psalm, (as he passes his Censure) nor understood the History, added this Inscription. Yet he himself thinks it was spoken by them in Captivity, when far from their own Land they longed to sing* God's *Praises; but could not do it publickly in* Babylon; *and therefore prayed* God, *in the Words of this Hymn, to turn their Captivity; and to bring them again to Sion; which I know not how to contradict; but seeing no Proof of it, I shall not meddle with that Sense in my Paraphrase.*

Ver. 1. *Praise waiteth for thee, O* God, *in Sion: and unto thee shall the Vow be performed.*] It becomes us, O God, above all other People, to praise thee in thy Sanctuary, (though we cannot worthily express, but must rather silently adore, thy incomparable Excellencies) and to pay the Vows which we made unto thee in the Time of our Distress.

Ver. 2. *O thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all Flesh come.*] And more especially to magnify thy Clemency in hearing my Prayer, (2 *Sam.* XXI. 1.) which may invite all Mankind, even those that are most miserable, to make their Addresses unto thee.

Ver. 3. *Iniquities prevail against me: as for our Transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.*] Nor need their Sins discourage them; for thou hadst Matter enough of that Kind against me, to have hindred the Prevalency of my Prayer, if thou hadst charged my Iniquities upon me: But thou hast been graciously pleased to forgive not only me, but all thy People their Transgressions whereby they have provoked thee.

Ver. 4. *Blessed* is the Man whom thou *chooseſt, and causeſt to approach* unto thee, that *he may dwell in thy Courts: we shall be satisfied with the Goodness of thy House, even of thy holy Temple.*] O how happy is the Condition of a Priest, or a Levite, whom thou hast chosen to minister before thee; and hath the Privilege to be continually employed in thy Service! Though we cannot all be so blessed, yet such is thy Goodness, we enjoy most sweet Refreshments in thy House, when we offer our Prayers and Praises to thee; and taste of the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, which we there present for the Benefits we have received from thee.

Ver. 5. *By terrible Things in Righteousness, wilt thou answer us, O* God *of our Salvation!* who art *the Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth, and of them* that are *afar off* upon *the Sea.*] Who hast done wonderful and astonishing Things for us, out of thy mere Mercy and Bounty, when in our Necessity we implored thy Help, O God; who not only marvellously savest and delivereſt us in this Nation from Destruction, but art the Support and Safeguard of all Mankind in the remotest Parts of the Earth, or Islands of the Sea.

Ver. 6. Which *by his Strength setteth fast the Mountains; being girded with Power.*] For God's Power, which is ready at all Times to execute his Pleasure, is not inferiour to his Mercy; but hath settled the Mountains in their Places, and sustains their vast Weight from sinking down into the Earth.

Ver. 7. Which *stilleth the Noise of the Seas, the Noise of their Waves, and the Tumult of the People.*] Against which, when the Sea beats tempestuously, he composes and silences its swelling and roaring Waves: As he doth, with the same Ease, the Rage and Fury of the People, when, by the Breath of unquiet, seditious Spirits, they rise up tumultuously, and break out into Rebellion.

Ver. 8. *They also that dwell in the uttermost Parts, are afraid at thy Tokens: thou makest the Outgoings of the Morning and Evening to rejoice.*] The most barbarous People, who live in the remotest Corners of the Earth, behold with Wonder and Amazement the heavenly Bodies, which thou hast appointed for Signs and Tokens, (*Gen.* I. 14.) by the rising of the Sun, the Moon and Stars, in the Morning and Evening, Thou fillest them with Joy as well as Admiration.

Ver. 9. *Thou visitest the Earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the River of* God which *is full of Water: thou preparest them Corn, when thou hast so provided for it.*] But we are more particularly bound unto thee; whose Land, which was lately visited with Drought, thou hast now refreshed and enriched with such liberal Showers out of the Clouds, (which like a vast River are never exhausted) as have made it exceeding fruitful; for from thence thou hast ordained, it should be constantly replenished.

Ver. 10. *Thou waterest the Ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the Furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with Showers, thou blessest the springing thereof.*] And accordingly when the Ground is ploughed up, thou sendest abundance of Rain upon its Ridges; which settle the Clods, and make them sink down upon the Seed that is newly sown: And when the Ground grows too hard, and hinders its sprouting forth, thou softnest and openest it with

with gentle Showers, which bring up the Blade; and that thy Blessing makes to prosper and thrive, till it grow up into Corn.

Ver. 11. *Thou crownest the Year with thy Goodness, and thy Paths drop Fatness.*] Thus thy Goodness hath made this a most plentiful Year, and magnificently adorned it with Variety of Fruits: For thy Clouds have wheeled about, and every where distilled a fatning Juice into the Earth.

Ver. 12. *They drop upon the Pastures of the Wilderness: and the little Hills rejoice on every side.*] They have made green Pastures even in desolate Places; and the little Hills, which before looked ruefully, appear now most beautiful, and have, as it were, put on the Garments of Joy and Gladness.

Ver. 13. *The Pastures are cloathed with Flocks: the Valleys also are covered over with Corn; they shout for Joy, they also sing.*] The Pastures, which were bare before, are cloathed now with Flocks, as they are with Grass; the Fields also are so covered with Corn, that the Face of the Earth cannot be seen: They keep a kind of Festival, which hath filled us all with an universal Mirth, and made us triumph in thy Goodness.

PSALM LXVI.

To the Chief Musician. A Song or Psalm.

ARGUMENT.

The vulgar Latin here again (so little Trust is to be given to it) hath an Inscription, which, as Theodoret *witnesses, is not to be found in other Interpreters, no more than in the Hebrew; no, not in the LXX. Translation, which was in the famous* Hexaplus. *Nor can any good Reason be given why they call it,* A Song Psalm concerning the Resurrection; *unless thereby we understand the Resurrection of the dry Bones, of which* Ezekiel *prophesied, Ch. XXXVII. which was the bringing the People in* Babylon, *where they seemed to be buried, to their own Land again,* v. 12. *And so* Theodoret *himself takes it for a Psalm which* David, *by a prophetical Spirit, composed for the People in Captivity, not praying for their Return, (as he fansies they do in the Psalm foregoing) but upon their Way home, and praising* God *for their Liberty.*

Certain it is this Psalm was made after a very remarkable Deliverance from some sore Calamity, under which the Nation had groaned. And it not being said by whom it was penned, nor who the Enemies were that oppressed them, it is generally thought not to be David's, *whose Name it doth not bear in the Title, as the foregoing do; but to have been made by some holy Man after, or in their Return from the forementioned Captivity. But he that collected the Psalms contained in this* second *Book, though he did not find* David's *Name in the Front of it; yet took him, I believe, to be the Author both of this and of the next Psalm, as well as of the foregoing: Otherwise he would not have placed them between those on both sides which certainly belong to him, when he intended, it appears by the Conclusion of this Book,* (LXXII. 20.) *to put together all the Prayers that he had then met withal of* David's. *He that considers also that the LXXI. and LXXII. Psalms have not* David's *Name in the Title, and yet are generally thought to be of his composing, will not take the Want of the usual Inscription here to be a sufficient Argument why we should seek for some other Author of this Psalm.*

Which was penned, I judge, after God *had advanced* David *to the Throne, and peaceably settled him in his Kingdom. Till which Time they had been in a very unsettled Condition, not only during the Rule of the* Judges *(when, as he speaks here,* v. 12. *many of their Neighbours rid over their Heads, or, as we now speak, domineered over them as they pleased) but also in the Reign of* Saul, *when the* Philistines *were so powerful, that the* Israelites *durst not look them in the Face, but hid themselves in* Caves, and Thickets, and in Rocks, and in high Places, and in Pits, 1 *Sam. XIII. 6. For they had disarmed them; so that when they came to fight, there was not a Man had a Sword or a Spear but only* Saul *and* Jonathan, *v.* 22. *And though they prevailed over the* Philistines *afterward in several Battles,* ch. *XIV, XVII. yet they grew so strong again, that they penetrated into the Country as far as Mount* Gilboa, *where* Saul *and his Sons were slain;* (ch. *XXXI.*) *and the People thereupon were so dismay'd, that they about* Jordan *forsook their Cities, and the* Philistines *came and dwelt in them,* v. 7. *To these Things the* 10, 11, 12. *Verses of this Psalm may have Respect. And then the freeing the Country from that Oppression, and forcing those insolent Enemies to submit to* David, *v.* 3. *(where there is the same Expression in Substance with that which he uses,* Psal. *XVIII.* 45. *after he had overcome all his Enemies) may be the Thing for which he here gives Praise to* God: *Exciting all the Country to join with him, in blessing his Divine Majesty; not only for this, but for former Deliverances, he had vouchsafed to that Nation. Which he would have acknowledged with their most cheerful Thanksgivings (which may be the Meaning of a* Song-psalm, *see LXVII.) especially in the publick Service of* God, *at the Tabernacle. Into which he promises to go,* v. 13, 14. *(a sign the Psalm was not made at their coming out of* Babylon, *when there was no House to go unto) and pay his Vows, which he had made before these Victories. But at their Return from* Babylon *it's like they might use this Psalm, and apply it to that Purpose; going to the Place where the House of* God *formerly stood.*

Ver. 1. *Make a joyful Noise unto* God, *all ye Lands.*] Let all the People of this Land shout aloud; and triumph in the Liberty which God hath restored unto us.

Ver. 2. *Sing forth the Honour of his Name: make his Praise glorious.*] Sing Psalms in Honour of his most glorious Majesty; and do not merely praise him, but do it in the most splendid Manner: And place your principal Glory in this, that you have the Honour to sing his Praises.

Ver.

Ver. 3. *Say unto* God, *How terrible* art thou in *thy Works! through the Greatneſs of thy Power ſhall thine Enemies ſubmit themſelves unto thee.*] Saying, O God, thy ſtupendious Works fill us with Wonder and Amazement; but we are not able to expreſs the Greatneſs of them: They ſtrike Terror into the Hearts of thy Enemies, who, feeling the dreadful Effects of thy Power, dare not oppoſe thee any longer; but diſſembling their Hoſtility, ſhall come and offer thee their Service, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 1.)

Ver. 4. *All the Earth ſhall worſhip thee, and ſhall ſing unto thee, they ſhall ſing to thy Name. Selah.*] For which be thou adored by all the Inhabitants of this Countrey: Let them all ſing joyful Hymns unto thee; let them ſing the Praiſe of thy Power, which hath thus daunted our Enemies, and delivered us.

Ver. 5. *Come and ſee the Works of* God: *he is terrible* in his *doing toward the Children of Men.*] Approach, I beſeech you, and attentively conſider what our God hath done, and then I need not exhort you to praiſe his Name: for the Works and Counſels of his Providence over all Mankind are very aſtoniſhing.

Ver. 6. *He turned the Sea into dry Land: they went through the Flood on Foot; there did we rejoice in him.*] Eſpecially over us, for whoſe Fathers, to their unſpeakable Joy, (*Exod.* XV.) he opened a Paſſage through the Red Sea; when they were ſo ſhut up between that before, and the Army of *Pharaoh* behind, that there was no Way left for their Eſcape (*Exod.* XIV. 16.) And alſo led them dry ſhod through the River *Jordan*, when it was ſo full of Water that it overflowed its Banks (*Joſh.* III. 15, 16, 17.) which created a new Joy in the Hearts of our Nation.

Ver. 7. *He ruleth by his Power for ever, his Eyes behold the Nations: let not the rebellious exalt themſelves. Selah.*] And it ought to continue ſtill in ſucceeding Ages, ſince the ſame Divine Power which did thoſe Wonders governs the World throughout all Generations: He ſees and obſerves the Motions of all Nations, who may learn, by the *Egyptians* and *Canaanites*, that they who contemn his Authority, in vain endeavour to exalt themſelves to greater Eminence; for they ſhall certainly be abaſed.

Ver. 8. *O bleſs our* God, *ye People, and make the Voice of his Praiſe to be heard.*] We have reaſon to ſay, that he is our God, and takes Care of us, as well as of thoſe before us: and therefore let all the Tribes of *Iſrael* agree together to bleſs him, and proclaim his Praiſes; that it may be for ever known how good he is, and how grateful they are.

Ver. 9. *Which holdeth our Soul in Life, and ſuffereth not our Feet to be moved.*] For he hath wonderfully preſerved us from periſhing in our Affliction: and not ſuffered our Enemies to purſue their Advantages to our utter Overthrow and Ruin.

Ver. 10. *For thou, O* God, *haſt proved us: thou haſt tried us, as Silver is tried.*] Thou haſt proved our Conſtancy indeed, O God, by moſt ſevere Chaſtiſements; and as a Refiner tries his Silver by throwing it into the Fire, ſo thou haſt dealt with us as well as with our Fore-fathers: whoſe Labours in the Iron Furnace of *Egypt*, we have been forced to imitate under our Oppreſſors.

Ver. 11. *Thou broughteſt us into the Net, thou laideſt Affliction upon our Loins.*] Our Enemies have purſued us, and brought us (like to wild Beaſts taken by the Hunter) into moſt grievous Straits, 1 *Sam.* XIII. 6. They have uſed us like Beaſts of Burthen, and laid ſore Loads upon us; which they have faſt bound upon our Backs. *Ib. v.* 19, 20.

Ver. 12. *Thou haſt cauſed Men to ride over our Heads, we went through Fire and through Water: but thou broughteſt us out into a wealthy* Place.] Thou haſt made us Slaves to the vileſt of Men, who exerciſe the moſt inſolent Tyranny over us: we have endured Variety of the ſoreſt Miſeries; and yet, ſuch is thy Goodneſs, thou haſt carried us through them all; and at laſt brought us into a State of perfect Liberty, Eaſe, and plenteous Proſperity.

Ver. 13. *I will go into thy Houſe with Burnt-offerings: I will pay thee my Vows.*] I will go therefore into thy Houſe, and give a good Example to all my People: For I will not preſent my ſelf before thee with empty Praiſes; but acknowledge thy Benefits with Burnt-offerings, and faithfully diſcharge the Vows wherein I ſtand engaged.

Ver. 14. *Which my Lips have uttered, and my Mouth hath ſpoken when I was in Trouble.*] Which I was not more forward to make with open Mouth when I was in Diſtreſs; than I will be to perform with all Solemnity now that thou haſt graciouſly delivered me out of it.

Ver. 15. *I will offer unto thee Burnt-ſacrifices of Fatlings, with the Incenſe of Rams: I will offer Bullocks with Goats. Selah.*] For as I will not come empty into thy Houſe; ſo I will not bring thee a niggardly Preſent: but offer Sacrifices of all Sorts; and the beſt and choiceſt in every Kind.

Ver. 16. *Come* and *hear, all ye that fear* God, *and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul.*] And together therewith I will make a thankful Commemoration of his Loving-kindneſs, (which is the moſt acceptable Sacrifice) and let all pious Men know (O that they would come and hearken to me while I relate) how good God hath been unto me.

Ver. 17. *I cried unto him with my Mouth, and he was extolled with my Tongue.*] For the ardent Prayers which I made unto him, in a very low Condition, are now turned into the higheſt Praiſes of his powerful Goodneſs; whereby I am advanced unto a Throne.

Ver. 18. *If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the* Lord *will not hear* me.] Which hath brought along with it a Teſtimony of my Sincerity; far more valuable than my Kingdom: For if I had been guilty of any ſuch Crimes, or entertained ſo much as a Thought of them, as my Enemies charged me withal; the Lord, who hates Iniquity, would have denied me my Requeſt.

Ver. 19. *But verily* God *hath heard* me: *he hath attended to the Voice of my Prayer.*] Which now ſure you all ſee he hath graciouſly granted; and thereby cleared my Innocence from all the Aſperſions that were caſt upon me.

Ver. 20. *Bleſſed* be God, *which hath not turned away my Prayer, nor his Mercy from me.*] To the Praiſe of God's infinite Goodneſs be it ſpoken (not of my own Righteouſneſs) who did not reject my Prayer; but vouchſafed me the Mercy which I deſired.

PSALM

PSALM LXVII.

To the Chief Musician upon *Neginoth*. A Psalm or Song.

ARGUMENT.

This excellent Psalm, all agree, hath the same Author with the former: which I have made it probable, (see Psal. LXVI.) was Composed by David, *who being settled in his Throne after miserable Confusions, and having brought the Ark to* Jerusalem, *and offered Burnt-Offerings, and Peace-Offerings, (as he promised in the Psalm foregoing,* ver. 15.*) blessed the People in the Name of the* Lord *of Hosts:* 2 Sam. *VI.* 17, 18. *pronounced, that is, this Psalm, (as I conjecture) wherein he manifestly imitates that Form of Blessing, which the Priests were appointed to use on solemn Occasions; (as you may read* Numb. *VI.* 23, 24, 25.*) beseeching* God *to continue his Favour to them, and to make them such an Example of his Loving-Kindness, that it might invite all Nations, to whom the Fame of it should come, to submit themselves unto his Government.*

It is no Argument against this, to say, that he doth not bless them here in the Name of the Lord; *which is used in the Blessing which* Moses *taught them. For it is certain he alludes, in the Beginning of the next Psalm, to the Form of Prayer used at the setting forward of the Ark,* (Numb. *X.* 35.) *and yet there also he uses the Word* Elohim *instead of* Jehova; *as he doth in this Psalm; which he delivered afterward to the Master of Musick, to be sung as the IVth Psalm.*

But what Difference there is between a Song-Psalm *and a* Psalm-Song, *(in which the Title of the* LXV. *and of this and the next, differ from the foregoing, as the Title of the* XXX. *doth from the* XLVIII.*) I am not able certainly to resolve. For some think that a* Psalm-Song, *or* Psalm of a Song, *began with Voices, the Musical Instruments following after; and a* Song-Psalm, *or* Song of a Psalm, *begun with Instruments, the Voices following after: Others give a quite contrary Account, for taking a* Psalm *to be properly the Sound of Instruments, (whereof there were six or seven sorts) and a* Song *to be the Voice of Singers; they will have a* Psalm-Song *to be that, where the Sound of Instruments preceding, the singing Voices followed; and a* Song-Psalm *that, where the Voices preceding, the Instrumental Musick followed. But* Kimchi *ingenuously confesses, in his Preface to the Book of Psalms, that their Nation can give no Account of such like Things, which we meet with in the Title of the Psalms.*

Ver. 1. *GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us: and cause his Face to shine upon us. Selah.*] Be gracious unto us, O God, and complete the Happiness, which thy Almighty Goodness hath begun to bestow upon us: let us not fall again into those dismal Calamities, out of which thou hast delivered us; but declare thou lovest us, by continuing thy gracious Presence with us.

Ver. 2. *That thy Way may be known upon Earth, thy saving Health among all Nations.*] That the Fame of thy wonderful Providence over us, and of the Deliverances thou workest for us, being spread not only here in this Country, but throughout all other Nations; they may be moved thereby to acknowledge and worship thee as the only God.

Ver. 3. *Let the People praise thee, O God, let all the People praise thee.*] O that we might see that happy Day! O that the People would confess and praise thee, O God, that all the People every where, with one Consent, would confess and praise thee.

Ver. 4. *O let the Nations be glad, and sing for Joy: for thou shalt judge the People righteously, and govern the Nations upon Earth. Selah.*] O that the Nations were so sensible what an Happiness it is to be under thy Care; that they may rejoice and shout for Joy, to know that thou art the Governour of the World! who by thy Power oppressest none, but distributest equal Justice unto all; and graciously providest for the Welfare of those who become thy Subjects, and commit themselves unto thy Conduct.

Ver. 5. *Let the People praise thee, O God; let all the People praise thee.*] We cannot often enough wish to see them so happy; but must again and again repeat our Desires; that the People would confess thee, O God, to be the Lord of all: that all the People every where, would with one Consent celebrate thee with their Praises, and confess that thou alone canst make them happy.

Ver. 6. Then *shall the Earth yield her Increase*; and God, even *our own* God, *shall bless us.*] As thou dost us, whose Land of late hath been so exceeding fruitful, (2 *Sam.* VI. 19.) that we may look upon it as an earnest of future Blessings: which may it please our good God, whose People we are by peculiar Covenant, to multiply upon us.

Ver. 7. *God shall bless us, and all the Ends of the Earth shall fear him.*] With this Prayer let us conclude, as we began, that God would be pleased still to pour down his Benefits upon us: that so the People, who live in the remotest parts of the Earth, may all devoutly worship and serve him.

PSALM LXVIII.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm or Song of *David*.

ARGUMENT.

David *having brought the Ark to* Jerusalem *with a great deal of Joy and Triumph,* (2 Sam. *VI.*) *after it had been long neglected in the Reign of* Saul, (1 Chron. *XIII.* 3.) *which was one Cause, it is like, that he had no better Success against his foreign Enemies; hoped* God *would be more propitious to him, according to the Prayer he had made in the foregoing Psalm. For now he had (to repair that Negligence of* Saul*) not only brought the Ark near to his own Palace, in the Chief City of the Kingdom, but prepared a noble Place for its Reception,* (2 Sam. *VI.* 16. 2 Chron. *I.* 4.) *which it had been a long Time without.*

For even since its falling into the Hands of the Philistines, (1 Sam. *IV.* 11.) *it had been separated from the* Tabernacle *of the* Congregation *built for it by* Moses, *which was* God's *Habitation or Dwelling-place; and after the Destruction of* Shiloh, *was removed to* Nob, (1 Sam. *XXI.* 6.) *and from thence, after* Doeg *had slain the Priests, to* Gibeon, (2. 7. 1. 3.) *where it remained till the building of* Solomon's *Temple. All which Time, it is manifest, it had no Ark of* God's *Presence in it, for that was in* Kirjath-jearim, (1 Sam. *VII.* 1.) *from whence* David *fetch'd it,* (1 Chron. *XIII.* 5.) *to Mount* Sion; *where he having made a Tabernacle for its Entertainment,* The Lord God *might be said (as we render it,* v. 18. *of this Psalm)* to dwell among them, *with an Intention not to remove from thence (as the Ark had done before) to any other Mountain,* v. 16. *And indeed here he dwelt more magnificently than he had done before, and was more Royally attended and solemnly served;* David *appointing a little before he died (as he had begun to do before,* 1 Chron. *XVI.) the Priests and Levites, in their Courses, constantly to wait upon him, with Songs and Instruments of Musick; and settling all other Officers belonging to a House, and suitable to the Greatness of the Majesty that dwelt there,* 1 Chron. *XXIII. XXIV. XXV. XXVI.*

Which Honour being done to God, *be hoped, as I said, that* God *would favour him in his Enterprizes, better than he had done* Saul, *who took Care of no such Matters. And being shortly to engage some potent Enemies,* (2 Sam. *VIII.*) *he earnestly begs the Presence of* God *with him (of which the Ark was a Token) in this excellent Psalm. And he begs in that very Form of Words,* (v. 1.) *which* Moses *had directed the Priests to use every Time that they took up the Ark, to set forward in their March to the Land of* Canaan, *Numb.* X. 35. *Upon which Occasion he calls to mind what Wonders* God *had done for them, in leading them by the Ark of his Presence through the Wilderness into their good Land. Where he hoped he would establish and settle his People, now that he had in so pompous and triumphant a manner ascended into the high Hill of* Sion (*out of which* David *had expelled the* Jebusites, 2 Sam. *V.* 6.) *and by his special Direction and Conduct already given them such great Victories over the* Philistines, *their mortal Enemies,* (2 Sam. *V.* 19, 25.) *that it was an Emblem of the far more glorious Ascension of the Lord* Christ, *after he had overcome Death it self, the last and greatest Enemy of Mankind, into the highest Heavens.*

Of the Title of the Psalm, see LXVII.

Ver. 1. LET God *arise, let his Enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him, flee before him.*] O that God, who by his powerful Presence conducted his People, in spite of all Opposers, into this Land, (*Numb.* X. 35.) would now graciously appear to disperse and put to Flight those numerous Armies, which, out of meer Hatred to him, come to dispossess us of it.

Ver. 2. *As Smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as Wax melteth before the Fire, so let the Wicked perish at the Presence of* God.] They are no more able to stand before him, than the Smoke (whatsoever Shew it makes) is to stand before the Wind; or the Wax (how firm soever it seem) before the Fire; but shall be dispelled, and melt away like those feeble Things: Just so shall those wicked People perish, if God will be pleased to manifest himself to be among us.

Ver. 3. *But let the Righteous be glad: let them rejoice before* God, *yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.*] Which shall fill the Hearts of all his faithful Servants with Joy and Gladness: They shall leap for Joy before him, (as I lately did when I brought up the Ark unto Mount *Sion*, 2 *Sam.* VI. 14, 16.) and be so extraordinarily transported, that they shall not find Words enough to express the Joy they have in his gracious Presence with them.

Ver. 4. *Sing unto* God, *sing Praises to his Name: extol him that rideth upon the Heavens by his Name* JAH, *and rejoice before him.*] O begin your chearful Hymns unto his Majesty; sing the Praise of his powerful Goodness, and of all the rest of his glorious Attributes, whereby he is known to you: Magnify him, and prepare a triumphal Pomp for him, who turns about even the highest Heavens, and rules them at his Pleasure: O rejoice exceedingly before him, who hath plainly shown, by what he hath lately done, that he is the eternal unchangeable God, who faithfully keeps his Promises for ever.

Ver. 5. *A Father of the Fatherless, and a Judge of the Widows,* is God *in his holy Habitation.*] The poorest and meanest Persons on Earth need not doubt of his Patronage; for tho' he be higher than the highest Heavens, yet he hath taken up his Dwelling among us: that the Fatherless and Widows, when they have no Helper, may fly unto his Fatherly Care, and appeal to him as their righteous Judge, to redress the Wrongs that are done unto them.

Ver. 6. God *setteth the Solitary in Families: he bringeth out those which are bound with Chains, but the rebellious dwell in a dry* Land.] God provides for those who are utterly destitute, and settles them in comfortable Habitations: He untigs the Chains of Captives, and gives them a happy Deliverance; but brings rebellious Oppressors into that Want and Scarcity whereunto they have reduced others.

Ver. 7. *O* God, *when thou wentest forth before thy People; when thou didst march through the Wilderness. Selah.*] A famous Instance of which we saw at our Coming out of *Egypt*; when thou, O God, wentest before thy People Night and Day, in a Pillar of Cloud and Fire, (*Exod.* XIII. 21.) and conductedst them, as their Captain, through a barren and dangerous Wilderness.

Ver. 8. *The Earth shook, the Heavens also dropped at the Presence of* God: *even Sinai it self was moved at the Presence of* God, *the* God *of Israel.*] The Earth trembled, yea, the Heavens dissolved into Thunder, Lightning and Rain, (*Exod.* XIX. 16.) when the Divine Majesty descended upon Mount *Sinai*, the Mount in it self quaked (v. 18.) before his glorious Majesty, who is still present with his People *Israel*.

Ver. 9. *Thou, O* God, *didst send a plentiful Rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine Inheritance, when it was weary.*] For whom, O God, thou

thou didst miraculously provide, by sending them liberal Showers in those dry and desart Places; and, having chosen them for thy own peculiar People, didst rain down Bread from Heaven, (*Exod.* XVI. 4.) to refresh and strengthen them when they were faint and weary.

Ver. 10. *Thy Congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O* God, *hast prepared of thy Goodness for the Poor.*] A vast Congregation of People, with their Flocks and their Herds, found a convenient Habitation in that Wilderness, by thy Bounty, O God; who didst furnish those who were in Danger to starve, with all Things necessary for them.

Ver. 11. *The* Lord *gave the Word, great was the Company of those that published it.*] Yea, the Lord made them so victorious over all those who opposed them, that they still returned from the Battle with Songs of Triumph in their Mouths; and a great Army of Women met them, (according to the Custom, *Exod.* XV. 23, &c.) to join with them in publishing his Praises; saying,

Ver. 12. *Kings of Armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at Home, divided the Spoil.*] The Kings and Captains of those Hosts who thought to have destroyed us, were put to Flight, (*Exod.* XVII. *Numb.* XXI. 2, 3, &c.) They fled away in Haste, and left their Spoil behind them, to be divided among us, that were too weak to go into the Field, (*Numb.* XXXI. 8, 11. *Judg.* VIII. 21, 26.)

Ver. 13. *Though ye have lien among the Pots, yet shall ye be as the Wings of a Dove covered with Silver, and her Feathers with yellow Gold.*] But we welcome Home our victorious Countrymen with this Encouragement, That though you have endured great Hardships in *Egypt*, where you looked not like valiant Soldiers, but rather like vile Scullions besmutted among Kettles and Pots, you shall hereafter appear most beautiful and splendid, and the Wings of your Armies shall shine like those of a Dove, when they glister as if they were covered with Silver and Gold.

Ver. 14. *When the Almighty scattered Kings in it, it was* white *as Snow in Salmon.*] And their Word was fulfilled at our Entrance into *Canaan*; when, by scattering all their Kings, the Almighty appeared most illustrious as *Salmon*, and gave us Possession of the Country on this Side *Jordan*.

Ver. 15. *The Hill of* God *is as the Hill of Bashan, an high Hill as the Hill of Bashan.*] As on the other Side of it he subdued the Country of *Og* King of *Bashan*, (*Numb.* XXI. 33, &c.) which Hill became the Hill of God; the Hill with so many fertil Risings, the famous Hill of *Bashan* became part of his Inheritance.

Ver. 16. *Why leap ye, ye high Hills?* this is *the Hill* which God *desireth to dwell in, yea, the* Lord *will dwell in it for ever.*] But do not grow proud of this, ye lofty Mountains; for neither the Height of *Salmon*, nor of *Bashan*, shall invite him there to make his Habitation; *Sion* is the Hill which he hath chosen to honour with that Favour; yea, there the Lord hath resolved to fix his Tabernacle, and never (till the *Messiah* come) to remove to any other.

Ver. 17. *The Chariots of* God *are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels: the* Lord *is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place.*] Nor let the Heathen brag of the Multitude of their Chariots, wherein consists their Strength; for in *Sion* there are ten thousand Times more, innumerable Hosts of Angels attending upon the Divine Majesty; who is with them there, as he was upon Mount *Sinai*, which now is in the Sanctuary.

Ver. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Captivity captive: thou hast received Gifts for Men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the* Lord God *might dwell* among them.] Thou hast declared as much, O God; who art gone up thither, and hast highly exalted thy self by illustrious Victories; which through their invisible Ministry, thou hast given us over our Enemies, (as the *Messiah*, who shall be thy Sanctuary, will do far more magnificently, when after the Conquest of Death, &c. he shall ascend in a bright Chariot, *Acts* I. 9. attended with the Heavenly Hosts, into the highest Heavens, to be exalted at thy right Hand) whom by thy Aid we have carried away Captive, and their Spoils together with them, to be distributed among thy People, (an Emblem of the rich Gifts the *Messiah* shall bestow upon us, and distribute among us after his Ascension;) yea, the rebellious Opposers of thee in other Nations, shall become Proselytes to dwell with thee, O Lord God, and worship at thy Sanctuary (as the Gentile World shall, by that Effusion of Divine Gifts, submit themselves to the *Messiah*, the Lord God of all the World.)

Ver. 19. *Blessed be the* Lord, who *daily loadeth us* with Benefits, even *the* God *of our Salvation. Selah.*] Blessed be the Lord, who Day by Day exercises as tender and careful a Providence over us, as a Mother over her Children, (*Isa.* XLVI 3.) That mighty God be blessed, to whom we owe all our Deliverances.

Ver. 20. *He that is our* God, *is the* God *of Salvation; and unto* God *the* Lord *belong the Issues from Death.*] And they are very great and very many, which it is not in the Power of any other God to bestow, but of him alone that dwells in *Sion*; who, as the Author of all Mens Being, and their supreme Lord and Governour, disposes of their Lives, and assigns them what Passages he pleases out of the World.

Ver. 21. *But* God *shall wound the Head of his Enemies: and the hairy Scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his Trespasses.*] And certainly God, the righteous Judge, will now break in pieces all those Enemies that lift up their Heads so high, in hope to destroy us: Their newest Captain, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 3.) whose shaggy Hair makes him look very terribly, shall not escape, if he go on still presumptuously to offend thee.

Ver. 22. *The* Lord *said, I will bring again from Bashan: I will bring my People again from the Depths of the Sea.*] Thus the Lord hath determined within himself, saying, I will renew the Wonders I wrought in former Times; and make my People as victorious over all these mighty Armies, as they were over *Og* the King of *Bashan*, (*Numb.* XXI.) and over *Pharaoh*, when they marched through the Red Sea, (*Exod.* XV.)

Ver. 23. *That thy Foot may be dipped in the Blood of thine Enemies: and the Tongue of thy Dogs in the same.*] The Victory shall be so compleat, and such a Slaughter made, that thou

mayest

mayest wade, and thy Dogs put their Tongues in the Blood that shall flow from those Enemies, and from him that leads them.

Ver. 24. *They have seen thy Goings, O* God, even *the Goings of my* God, *my King, in the Sanctuary.*] For thy People, O God, have seen to their Joy, and thy Enemies to their Terror, what a solemn Entrance thou madest (by the Ark of thy Presence) with what Pomp thou, my mighty God, and my King, wast brought into the Sanctuary, 2 *Sam.* VI. 13, 15, 16.

Ver. 25. *The Singers went before, the Players on Instruments* followed *after*; *amongst* them were *the Damsels playing with Timbrels.*] Part of the *Levites* went singing before, and the rest with musical Instruments followed after, (1 *Chron.* XV. 16, 28.) and to complete the Melody, the Damsels playing with Timbrels came between them both.

Ver. 26. *Bless ye* God *in the Congregations*, even *the* Lord, *from the Fountain of Israel.*] And as they went along, they sung this Song; O bless your good God all your Assemblies: Bless the Lord, all ye that are the Off-spring of *Israel.*

Ver. 27. *There* is *little Benjamin* with *their Ruler, the Princes of Judah*, and *their Counsel, the Princes of Zebulun*, and *the Princes of Naphtali.*] Who were universally assembled to accompany that Pomp, (1 *Chron.* XIII. 5. XV. 3.) for not only the neareſt Tribes were there, *viz. Benjamin*, little indeed in Number, (*Judg.* XXI. 6.) but from whom the first King of *Israel* came; and the Princes of the Tribe of *Judah*, the great Support and Prop of the Kingdom: But the Princes also of those which were most remote, as *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, came to attend at that Solemnity.

Ver. 28. *Thy* God *hath commanded thy Strength; strengthen, O* God, *that which thou hast wrought for us.*] This happy Union, thy God, O *Israel*, hath brought about; and thereby made thee strong and formidable to thy Enemies: And may it please thee, O God, to continue and confirm it; for as it is begun, so it must be perfected by thee alone.

Ver. 29. *Because of thy Temple at Jerusalem, shall Kings bring Presents unto thee.*] Pour down thy Blessings upon *Jerusalem*, out of thy Sanctuary, (1 *Sam.* I. 9. III. 3.) which now thou hast settled there: And so shall Heathen Kings bring Presents, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 9, 10, 11.) in Token of their Subjection to thee.

Ver. 30. *Rebuke the Company of Spear-men, the Multitude of the Bulls, with the Calves of the People, till every one submit himself with Pieces of Silver: scatter thou the People that delight in War.*] Destroy that fierce Prince (2 *Sam.* VIII. 3.) who like a wild Beast out of the Forest comes against us; with a great Number of Captains as furious as Bulls; and of Soldiers as insolent as young Heifers: who prances in Arms plated with Silver, and unprovoked by us, makes War upon us merely to satisfie his vain Ambition, or Desire of Wealth: Scatter, good Lord, all such People as have no better Reason for the Blood they delight to shed.

Ver. 31. *Princes shall come out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her Hands unto* God.] Which shall invite even the *Egyptians* to send Princely Embassadors to *Jerusalem*: and the neighbouring Countries also (1 *Kings* IV. 21.) shall make Haste to stretch out their Hands unto the Divine Majesty, in Oblations and Prayers (which the most Idolatrous Nations in the World shall, in Abundance, offer unto the Lord Christ, when he reigns).

Ver. 32. *Sing unto* God, *ye Kingdoms of the Earth: O sing Praises* unto *the* Lord, *Selah.*] Nothing shall conduce so much to their Happiness: And therefore, O ye Kingdoms of the Earth, both far and near, sing joyful Songs unto God; set forth the Praises of the great Lord of all the World, with Hymns and Psalms.

Ver. 33. *To him that rideth upon the Heaven of Heavens*, which were *of old, lo, he doth send out his Voice*, and that *a mighty Voice.*] Whose Empire is the most ancient of all other, and extends beyond the highest Heavens: Hearken when it thunders, and consider how terrible his Majesty is; for that is his Voice, which makes the mightiest Men on Earth to tremble.

Ver. 34. *Ascribe ye Strength unto* God: *his Excellency* is *over Israel, and his Strength is in the Clouds.*] I would advise you all to acknowledge his Divine Power, by hearty Submission to him: whose Care over *Israel* as plainly appears in many magnificent Works, as Thunder declares his Strength in the Clouds.

Ver. 35. O God, thou art *terrible out of thy holy Places, the* God *of Israel* is *he that giveth Strength and Power to* his *People: blessed* be God.] O God, thy dreadful Majesty is to be most humbly adored, who strikest Terror into thy Enemies, both out of thy Sanctuary here in *Sion*, and out of thy Sanctuary in Heaven: But art most gracious to thy People, whom, as thy peculiar Portion, thou indued'st with mighty Strength, and invincible Courage. Blessed be God for his Goodness to us.

PSALM LXIX.

To the Chief Musician upon *Shoshannim.* A Psalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the Title assures us, was Composed by David; *and the Matter of it sufficiently declares, that he was in extreme great Danger when it was penned. I should suppose it might have been about that Time, when he concluded, that he should one Day perish by the Hand of* Saul, (1 Sam. *XXVII.* 1.) *were it not for what we read here*, v. 35. *of this Psalm, concerning* God's *Love to* Sion: *which was not then in the Possession of the* Israelites. *And therefore it must rather be indited when he was persecuted by his Rebellious Son* Absalom: *who pressed him so sorely, and reduced him to such lamentable Straits, that, as he feared, he should never be able to extricate himself; so he could find no Words high enough to express the Agonies into which they cast him. But this is not so considerable a Difficulty, as to be sufficient to incline those who read the whole Psalm seriously, to conclude that it hath no Reference to* Saul's *Persecution: unto which same Passa-*

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ges in it ſeem more plainly to belong than to the other. And therefore I ſuppoſe he only reviewed it, (See Pſal. LXX.) and added the 35th Verſe, in the Rebellion of Abſalom: *which was likewiſe ſo grievous and dangerous, that he could find no Words fitter to repreſent his ſad Condition, than thoſe he had formerly uſed in the like Diſtreſs. And ſome of the Expreſſions, it is manifeſt, are ſuch, as were not literally fulfilled in him, in either of thoſe Afflictions; but in our* Saviour CHRIST: *Of whom* David *was a Figure, both in his Sufferings, and in his Advancement after them, to a Kingdom. There is no Miſtery I ſuppoſe in the Word* Shoſhannim *(as ſome of the* Jews *fanſie) but it only denotes that the Maſter of the Muſick was to take Care this Pſalm ſhould be ſung as the XLV: to which I refer you for an Account of this Word.*

Why Theodoret *ſhould think this Pſalm was made without Reſpect to* David *for the* Jews *in the Captivity of* Babylon, *praying for Deliverance out of that Servitude, I cannot imagine. But what he adds concerning our* Saviour's *Sufferings, which are here foretold, together with the utter Overthrow of the* Jewiſh *Nation, who were the Authors of them, is very conſiderable. For becauſe, ſaith he, they were ſo audaciouſly wicked, as to do that to their Benefactor and* Saviour, *which they had ſuffered from their ſpiteful Enemies;* GOD *the righteous Judge condemned them to ſuffer that themſelves, which they prayed might fall on the Heads of thoſe Enemies.*

Ver. 1. *SAve me, O* GOD, *for the Waters are come in unto* my *Soul.*] O moſt mighty GOD, in whom alone I hope for Safety; deliver me, I beſeech thee, out of this miſerable Condition: Wherein I am overwhelmed with ſo many Calamities, that my Life is in extreme Danger; unleſs thou mercifully preſerve it.

Ver. 2. *I ſink in deep Mire, where* there is *no Standing: I am come into deep Waters, where the Floods overflow me.*] There is no Hope otherways, that I ſhould eſcape; for I am like a Man that ſinks deeper and deeper into the Mud, and can find no Bottom: Or that is faln into the very deepeſt Place in a River; and carried away out of the Reach of humane Help, by the Violence of the Stream.

Ver. 3. *I am weary of my crying, my Throat is dried: mine Eyes fail, while I wait for my* GOD.] I have long alſo implored thy Help, with moſt earneſt Prayers; even till I am tired with my crying: I can now ſcarce ſpeak a Word, nor lift up my Eyes towards Heaven, from whence, with great Intention of Mind, I have expected ſome Relief; but cannot yet obtain it of my GOD, who hath been formerly moſt gracious to me.

Ver. 4. *They that hate me without a Cauſe, are more than the Hairs of my Head: they that would deſtroy me,* being *mine Enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I reſtored* that *which I took not away.*] No, rather my Enemies are grown more formidable, both for their Number, which exceeds the Hairs of my Head, and for their Power, which enables them to deſtroy me: To which they want no Will, having conceived an implacable but undeſerved Hatred to me. Who have been ſo far from provoking their Malice, that I am content, rather than quarrel with them, to part with my own Right; and make them Satisfaction for a Wrong that I never did them.

Ver. 5. *O* GOD, *thou knoweſt my Fooliſhneſs; and my Sins are not hid from thee.*] O GOD, the righteous Judge, I make my Appeal to thee, who knoweſt the very worſt of me: And proteſt, that, whatſoever my Miſtakes or my wilful Sins have been, which cannot eſcape thy Sight, I never did them any Injury; nor gave them Cauſe to perſecute me.

Ver. 6. *Let not them that wait on thee, O* LORD GOD *of Hoſts, be aſhamed for my Sake: let not thoſe that ſeek thee be confounded for my Sake, O* GOD *of Iſrael.*] Which will move thee, I hope, to take ſome Compaſſion on me; for it will extremely diſhearten all pious Men, if thou ſuffereſt Innocence to be thus ruined: For their Sakes, as well as for mine, be pleaſed to relieve me; O let not thoſe that rely alone on thee, O LORD, the mighty GOD, who commandeſt all the Powers in Heaven and Earth, hang down their Heads for Shame, to ſee me deſerted by thee: Let not thoſe, O GOD, (who haſt ingaged thy ſelf unto us by a gracious Covenant) that commend themſelves to thee in well doing, be confounded; as they will, if they ſee me forſaken by thee.

Ver. 7. *Becauſe for thy Sake I have born Reproach: Shame hath covered my Face.*] For it is upon thy Account (merely becauſe I adhere to thee, and will uſe no unlawful Means to right my ſelf, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 10, *&c.*) that I have thus long ſuffered ſo many Reproaches and Abuſes, as have made me extremely contemptible.

Ver. 8. *I am become a Stranger unto my Brethren, and an Aliant unto my Mother's Children.*] Not only to thoſe that do not know me, but to my Couſins and Familiars; nay, to thoſe who lay in the ſame Womb with me: Who behave themſelves towards me, as if I were a perfect Stranger; or a Man of another Countrey and Religion.

Ver. 9. *For the Zeal of thine Houſe hath eaten me up; and the Reproaches of them that reproached thee are faln upon me.*] Whereas thou knoweſt, it was nothing but my ardent Zeal for thy Honour and Service (not any childiſh Ambition) which made me hazard my Life for them; and was the firſt Occaſion of this Hatred they bear me, (1 *Sam.* XVIII. 6, 7, 8. as it will be of the Death of the Meſſiah, *Joh.* II. 17.) I could not endure the Blaſphemies which I heard againſt thee, but they moved my Indignation (as they will do his, *Rom.* XV. 3.) as much as if they had been againſt my ſelf, 1 *Sam.* XVII. 10, 26, 45.

Ver. 10. *When I wept,* and chaſtened *my Soul with faſting, that was to my Reproach.*] Theſe Things grieved me exceedingly; and it hath coſt me many a Tear, while I humbled my Soul with faſting, to bewail their Impiety, and the Diſhonour that was done thee: But they took Occaſion from thence only to deſpiſe me; and to load me with greater Reproaches, either of Weakneſs or of Hypocriſie.

Ver. 11. *I made Sackcloth alſo my Garment; and I became a Proverb to them.*] And ſtill the more ſorrowfully I debaſed my ſelf, wearing Sackcloth in Token of my Heavineſs; the more

I was scorned and derided; and it was the common Saying, (when they would express their utmost Hatred or Contempt of any Man) I value him no more than I do *David*.

Ver. 12. *They that sit in the Gate, speak against me; and* I was *the Song of the Drunkards.*] This is the Language even of the grave Senators, and Judges of the Land; who ought in Reason rather to have vindicated my Innocence, (*Gen.* XXIII. 10, 18. XXXIV. 20. *Ruth* IV. 1. *Prov.* XXII. 22.) as well as of the idle and dissolute Companions, who, in their drunken Meetings, make abusive Songs, and Libels on me.

Ver. 13. *But as for me, my Prayer* is *unto thee,* O LORD, in *an acceptable Time: O* GOD, *in the Multitude of thy Mercy hear me, in the Truth of thy Salvation.*] While I in the mean Time, do nothing but only commend my self with the greater Earnestness unto thee, O LORD; who, now that I am so despicable, wilt think it I hope the fittest Time to be favourable to me: Hear my Prayer, O GOD, I beseech thee, and thereby magnifie thy abundant Mercy, and thy Faithfulness, in such a seasonable Deliverance of me.

Ver. 14. *Deliver me out of the Mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep Waters.*] For I am in extreme great Danger of perishing in this Distress, unless thou interpose (as I most humbly again beseech thee that thou wilt, v. 1, 2.) for my Deliverance: O leave me not in this miserable Condition into which I am plunged; but deliver me from my bitter Enemies, and all the Troubles and Difficulties wherein they have involved me.

Ver. 15. *Let not the Water-flood overflow me, neither let the Deep swallow me up, and let not the Pit shut her Mouth upon me.*] Which are great and many; and extremely dangerous, enough to make me despair of Safety, did I not depend on thee; that thou wilt not suffer me to be carried away, overwhelmed, and buried in this Heap of Calamities, which oppress me so sorely, that I am ready to sink under the Weight of them.

Ver. 16. *Hear me,* O LORD, *for thy Loving-kindness* is *good: turn unto me according to the Multitude of thy tender Mercies.*] Do not fail my Expectation, O LORD, whose Loving-kindness, as it is the only Comfort I have, so it gives me abundant Consolation: For it is prone to pity, and relieve those that are distressed; and will incline thee, I hope, to look now favourably upon me, as thou hast done, many and many a Time, with most compassionate Mercy towards me.

Ver. 17. *And hide not thy Face from thy Servant, for I am in Trouble: hear me speedily.*] Who, as despicable as I am, yet am thy Servant; and upon that Score claim the Patronage of my most gracious LORD and Master: O disown me not, especially now that I am in such helpless Straits; but rather make the greater hast to relieve me.

Ver. 18. *Draw nigh unto my Soul,* and *redeem it: deliver me, because of mine Enemies.*] For nothing less than my Life (which is in imminent Danger) will satisfie the Rage and Hatred of my Enemies: Therefore interpose thy Power for my Rescue, and let not them have the Pleasure (which will make them still more insolent) to see me ruined.

Ver. 19. *Thou hast known my Reproach, and my Shame, and my Dishonour: mine Adversaries* are *all before thee.*] Thou art perfectly acquainted with the Reproaches, the shameful and contumelious Abuses of all Sorts, which I have suffered; and must still (without thy seasonable Deliverance) indure from my cruel Enemies: None of whom, nor of their secret Plots, and subtle Lies, whereby they seek to defame and undo me, are hidden from thy All-seeing Eyes.

Ver. 20. *Reproach hath broken my Heart, and I am full of Heaviness: and I looked* for some *to take pity, but* there was *none; and for Comforters, but I found none.*] Which behold likewise, what an intolerable Burthen it is to me, to be thus loaded with Reproaches; and to have no Means to clear my self from their false Imputations: It even breaks my Heart, and I am oppressed with Heaviness, looking still for some Help to arrive; but alas! I cannot meet with so much as the Comfort of any Body to condole with me.

Ver. 21. *They gave me also Gall for my Meat, and in my Thirst they gave me Vinegar to drink.*] Instead of that, they exasperated my Grief; and because I was so miserable, reproached me the more bitterly: Just as if when a Man is hungry, one should give him Gall to eat; or when he is thirsty, they should give him (as they really will do to CHRIST, *Joh.* XIX.) Vinegar to drink.

Ver. 22. *Let their Table become a Snare before them: and* that which should have been *for* their *Welfare,* let it become *a Trap.*] Which barbarous Usage shall meet with a suitable Vengeance; for they shall have no Friends neither: But they that eat of their Meat shall betray them, and their Prosperity shall prove their Ruin. (This shall be the Recompence of those that abuse the *Messiah,* as now they do me, *Rom.* XI. 9.)

Ver. 23. *Let their Eyes be darkened that they see not; and make their Loins continually to shake.*] They shall be deprived of all Judgment, and not be able to see the Evils that are coming on them; or if they do, let them not be able, O LORD, to prevent them; but make their Counsels uncertain, and let them have no Power to execute any good Design for their Preservation.

Ver. 24. *Pour out thine Indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful Anger take hold of them.*] Pour out on a Sudden so many Evils upon them, that they may not be able to escape: But feel they suffer the most dismal Effects of thy severest and lasting Displeasure against them.

Ver. 25. *Let their Habitation be desolate,* and *let none dwell in their Tents.*] Let their most magnificent Structures be laid waste; and root them out so intirely, that there may not be a Man left to dwell in their poorest Cottages; (*Matt.* XXIII. 38. *Act.* I. 20.)

Ver. 26. *For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the Grief of those whom thou hast wounded.*] For they had no Pity upon the Miserable; but instead of comforting him, when they saw him afflicted by thee, they took that Opportunity to insult over him, and oppress him: Nay, made a Pastime of his Calamity; and added to all his other Suffering, their Scoffs and Jeers, their Lyes and Calumnies, or at least their uncharitable Censures of him.

Ver. 27. *Add Iniquity to their Iniquity: and let them not come into thy Righteousness.*] Let such obstinate Offenders be quite deserted by thee; and

and by thy juſt Judgment be ſuffered to go on to complete their Iniquity, and never obtain any Mercy from thee.

Ver. 28. *Let them be blotted out of the Book of the Living, and not be written with the righteous.*] Let them be cut off before their Time, in the midſt of their Jollity; and let them enjoy none of the Bleſſings, which thou haſt promiſed to the Righteous.

Ver. 29. *But I* am *poor and ſorrowful: let thy Salvation, O* God, *ſet me up on high.*] But let me, O God, who now am deſpiſed and dejected, be graciouſly delivered by thee, and raiſed above the Contempt, or Power of ſuch Men to depreſs me.

Ver. 30. *I will praiſe the Name of* God *with a Song, and will magnifie him with Thankſgiving.*] And I will not be unmindful of the Benefit; but praiſe thy Power and Goodneſs in joyful Hymns; and acknowledge how great they are in thankful Commemorations of them.

Ver. 31. This *alſo ſhall pleaſe the* Lord *better than an Ox* or *Bullock that hath Horns and Hoofs.*] Which will be, I know, more acceptable Sacrifices to the Lord, than if I ſhould bring him a whole Ox, when he is young, and in his prime, and offer him at his Altar.

Ver. 32. *The humble ſhall ſee* this, and *be glad: and your Heart ſhall live that ſeek* God.] For other pious Men, reading in my Songs, the Goodneſs of the Lord, will be filled with joyful Hopes; when they fall into ſuch like Troubles as I am in: They will think they hear me ſaying to them; Do not deſpond, but be of good Comfort, whoſoever you are that ſeek God, and faithfully depend upon him.

Ver. 33. *For the* Lord *heareth the Poor, and deſpiſeth not his Priſoners.*] For the Lord, you ſee, doth not fail to relieve the afflicted and helpleſs Men, when they cry unto him, and rely on him alone: but owns them for his Servants, when they are no better than Slaves; by delivering them from their hard and cruel Bondage.

Ver. 34. *Let the Heaven and Earth praiſe him, the Seas, and every Thing that moveth therein.*] Let the whole World therefore join together, to celebrate him with their higheſt Praiſes: For one Tongue is not ſufficient to proclaim his moſt excellent Goodneſs; and to thank him for all his Benefits.

Ver. 35. *For* God *will ſave Zion, and will build the Cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in Poſſeſſion.*] Which ſhall be continued towards *Sion*; for God will preſerve it from being deſtroyed in theſe Tumults: and will repair the Ruins of the other Cities of *Judah*; that his People may dwell quietly, and not be diſturbed in their Poſſeſſions.

Ver. 36. *The Seed alſo of his Servants ſhall inherit it: and they that love his Name ſhall dwell therein.*] And their Poſterity alſo may hereafter inherit it; provided they faithfully ſerve him, and heartily love him and his Religion: For then they ſhall dwell ſecurely in *Sion*; and offer the continual Sacrifice of Praiſe unto him.

PSALM LXX.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David*, to bring to Remembrance.

ARGUMENT.

It is not eaſie to determine, whether this Pſalm was only ſeparated from the XL. (whereof, for the main, it is a part) that it might ſerve thoſe who are in any Diſtreſs, as a ſhort Form of recommending themſelves and their Condition to God: *or that* David *in ſome new Danger (probably that into which he fell by* Abſalom's *Conſpiracy, as* Theodoret *thinks) took a Review of what he had there ſaid; and with ſome ſmall Alterations, compoſed this as a diſtinct Prayer, to be uſed by him conſtantly, during the Time of that ſharp Affliction. I incline to this latter, becauſe there is ſome Difference (though not very much, in the fourth Verſe) between every Verſe of this Pſalm, and thoſe in the latter End of the XL. from which it is taken: juſt as there is between the* LIII. *and the* XIV. *See what I have ſaid there; and in the Title of the* XXXVIII. *Pſalm, you will find why this is called,* A Pſalm to bring to Remembrance.

Ver. 1. MAke Haſte, *O* God, *to deliver me; make Haſte to help me, O* Lord.] O God, the Judge of the World, thou ſeeſt the Danger I am in is ſo exceeding great, that I am undone without thy ſpeedy Relief: which I beſeech thee therefore not to delay; but to make Haſte, O Lord, to declare thy Power in ſending me ſeaſonable Help, for my Reſcue, now that I am ready to periſh.

Ver. 2. *Let them be aſhamed and confounded, that ſeek after my Soul: let them be turned backward, and put to Confuſion, that deſire my Hurt.*] My Enemies fanſie that I cannot eſcape their Hands; but do thou moſt ſhamefully diſappoint all thoſe that reſtleſly endeavour to take away my Life: Defeat them, and put them to Flight with open Diſgrace; whoſoever they be that ſtudy to do me any Miſchief.

Ver. 3. *Let them be turned back for a Reward of their Shame, that ſay, Aha, aha.*] Let a total Rout of their Forces be the Recompence of their ſhameful Deeds; whereby they thought to have expoſed me to Shame: when they inſulted over my Calamity; and made a Mock both of it, and of my Hope that thou wouldeſt deliver me.

Ver. 4. *Let all thoſe that ſeek thee rejoice, and be glad in thee: and let ſuch as love thy Salvation ſay continually, Let* God *be magnified.*] But let all thoſe that depend on thee alone, and ſeek by no other Means, but ſuch as thou alloweſt, for Safety, have perpetual Cauſe to rejoice in thee exceedingly: Let ſuch as expect and delight to ſee thee appear for the Deliverance of thy People, never ceaſe to ſay; Let the righteous Judge of the World be praiſed; let the Glory of his wonderful Works be every where publiſhed and extolled.

Ver. 5. *But I* am *poor and needy, make Haſte unto me, O* God: *thou* art *my Help and my Deliverer, O* Lord, *make no tarrying.*] O God, I beſeech thee again, delay not to ſpeed the Relief I expect from thee; that this may be my Song alſo: for at preſent I am ſtripe of all,

and

and utterly deſtitute of humane Help; nay, ſo forlorn, that I ſhall periſh preſently, unleſs thou prevent it, O LORD; on whom alone I rely for Help and Deliverance, which I once more beſeech thee to ſend me ſpeedily.

PSALM LXXI.

ARGUMENT.

Though this Pſalm want an Inſcription, yet it is generally thought that David *was the Author of it: And if he was, there is no doubt he compoſed it, upon the Occaſion of* Abſalom's *unnatural Rebellion. For the Matter of the Pſalm ſufficiently informs us, that when he made it, he was in extreme great Danger of periſhing; and this Danger alſo happened in the Time of his old Age,* v. 9. *when he was gray-headed,* v. 18. *Now he was not ſo during the Time of* Saul's *Perſecution;* (2 Sam. *V.* 4.) *but in that of* Abſalom's *he was; which though it did not laſt ſo long as the other, yet in this Regard was more grievous to him; that it fell out in his declining Years: when Men are more unapt for Toil and Labour; and naturally deſirous of Quiet and Repoſe. And therefore he begins the Pſalm, almoſt in the ſame Words, as he doth one of thoſe which he made when he was diſtreſſed by* Saul, *(Pſal. XXXI.) in his younger Years, when he was better able to bear it.*

As for the Title, which ſome of the Greek *Tranſlators, and from them the* Latin, *have prefixed to this Pſalm (which they will have to be a Pſalm of the* Sons of *Jonadab* and the firſt Captives) *it is ſo far from the Buſineſs, that it is hard to give any Account of it. For* Theodoret *pertinently obſerves, that the Sons of* Jonadab *were not among the firſt Captives; and that he who made this Inſcription, confeſſes he did not find it in the* Hebrew, *but placed it there himſelf. Yet that learned Father, I know not for what Reaſon, takes this Pſalm to have been compoſed by* David, *in the Perſon of thoſe who were captive in* Babylon; *wiſhing Deliverance from that Servitude, and deſiring to be reſtored to their own Land.*

Ver. 1. *IN thee, O* LORD, *do I put my Truſt, let me never be put to Confuſion.*] Thou ſeeſt, O LORD, that in all theſe Troubles which have befaln me, I have no Confidence in any Thing, but only thy powerful Goodneſs; which I hope will not fail me now, no more than it hath ever done heretofore; for I ſhall be lamentably aſhamed, if thou ſhouldſt fruſtrate my Expectation.

Ver. 2. *Deliver me in thy Righteouſneſs, and cauſe me to eſcape: incline thine Ear unto me, and ſave me.*] Magnifie thy Mercy and Fidelity in delivering me; and finding a Way for my Eſcape from theſe Dangers that ſurround me: let me obtain this extraordinary Favour of thee, and preſerve me from falling into the Hands of thoſe, who have conſpired to deſtroy me.

Ver. 3. *Be thou my ſtrong Habitation whereunto I may continually Reſort: thou haſt given Commandment to ſave me, for thou* art *my Rock and my Fortreſs.*] For I am forced to quit my Habitation, and have no Place of Safety (ſo univerſal is the Revolt) to retreat unto; but whenſoever I fly to thy Almighty Protection, do thou always keep me as ſecure, as if I repoſed my ſelf in an impregnable Caſtle: it is thy Purpoſe I am confident to preſerve me; for I never truſted in any other ſtrong Hold or Fortreſs, but thee alone.

Ver. 4. *Deliver me, O my* GOD, *out of the Hand of the wicked, out of the Hand of the unrighteous and cruel Man.*] Deliver me therefore from falling into the Power of that turbulent Man, who hath no fear of thee before his Eyes: from the Power of him that cares not by what perfidious Arts, or cruel Violence, he brings his Ends to paſs.

Ver. 5. *For thou* art *my Hope, O* LORD GOD: thou art *my Truſt from my Youth.*] For in thee, O LORD, who haſt a ſovereign Dominion, which alters not, have I placed all my Hope; and from thee is my Expectation: when I was but a Youth, I confided in thee (1 *Sam.* XVII. 33, 37.) and was marvellouſly preſerved by thee.

Ver. 6. *By thee have I been holden up from the Womb: thou art he that took me out of my Mothers Bowels, my Praiſe* ſhall be *continually of thee.*] Who didſt take care of me, even before I could truſt in thee; for I have been ſupported by thee, and preſerved in innumerable Dangers, ever ſince I came out of my Mother's Womb: where I had periſhed alſo, if thy Power had not drawn me thence, and brought me into the World; to praiſe and bleſs thee, as I have ever done, and will never ceaſe to do, to the End of my Days.

Ver. 7. *I am as a Wonder unto many; but thou* art *my ſtrong Refuge.*] There are many indeed (eſpecially the great ones) that ſtare upon me, as if I were a Monſter; marvelling as much at this Confidence I place in thee, as they do at my ſudden Fall into this deplorable Condition: But, for all their Taunts, I do not look upon my ſelf as abandoned by thee; but have a ſtrong Hope that thou wilt deliver me.

Ver. 8. *Let my Mouth be filled* with *thy Praiſe,* and with *thy Honour all the Day.*] And that I ſhall ſtill have abundant Cauſe to praiſe without ceaſing thy moſt magnificent Goodneſs towards me.

Ver. 9. *Caſt me not off in the Time of old Age, forſake me not when my Strength faileth.*] I have deſerved, I know, very ill of thee; but let me prevail with thee, notwithſtanding, for the Continuance of thy Favour towards me; and do not reject me now in my old Age: O forſake me not, when I have moſt need of thy Help, and am leaſt able to do any Thing for my ſelf; but let that good Providence, which watched over me in my Youth, be ſtill my Security.

Ver. 10. *For mine Enemies ſpeak againſt me: and they that lay wait for my Soul, take Counſel together.*] For my Enemies are no leſs ſubtle, than they are cruel; having defamed me, and taken away my Reputation: As they now ſeek for an Opportunity, and for that End are combined in a ſtrong Conſpiracy to take away my Life, (2 *Sam.* XV. 3, 12.)

Ver. 11. *Saying,* GOD *hath forſaken him: perſecute and take him, for* there is *none* to *deliver* him.]

him.] Incouraging one another in their Enterpriſe, with ſuch Words as theſe; GOD it is manifeſt hath forſaken him, for the Hearts of all *Iſrael* are turned from him, and his own Heart faileth him (2 *Sam.* XV. 13, 14.) purſue him cloſely now, and we ſhall certainly take him; for he hath not Forces enough to withſtand us, and to deliver him out of our Hands, 2 *Sam.* XVII. 1, 2.

Ver. 12. *O* GOD, *be not far from me: O my* GOD, *make Haſte for my Help.*] But how falſe ſoever my Subjects are, it daunts me not, if thou, O GOD, who judgeſt righteouſly, wilt not be eſtranged from me: O my GOD, who haſt hitherto ſo wonderfully preſerved me, let this their vain Confidence, and inſulting Language, incline thee to make the greater Speed to relieve me.

Ver. 13. *Let them be confounded,* and *conſumed, that are Adverſaries to my Soul: let them be covered* with *Reproach and Diſhonour, that ſeek my Hurt.*] Let thoſe implacable Enemies, that will not be ſatisfied but with my Life, be moſt ſhamefully diſappointed; and ſee all their Forces wherein they truſted quite diſſipated, and come to nothing: expoſe them that deſign my Ruin to the open Shame and Contempt of all the World; when they find that they have only ridiculouſly contrived their own Deſtruction.

Ver. 14. *But I will hope continually, and will yet praiſe thee more and more.*] And I will learn thereby, both to hope in thee perpetually (as now I do) even in the greateſt Straits and Difficulties; and to add new Songs of Praiſe, over and above all thoſe which I have already compoſed, to magnifie thee for the vaſt Heap of Benefits which thou haſt conferred on me.

Ver. 15. *My Mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy Righteouſneſs,* and *thy Salvation all the Day long: for I know not the Numbers* thereof.] That ſhall be the Subject of my Songs, to publiſh thy Mercy and Truth in judging righteouſly between me and my Enemies: this ſhall be my continual Imployment; though I ſhall never be able to tell the leaſt Part of that Mercy, which will appear in my Deliverance from ſuch formidable Enemies.

Ver. 16. *I will go in the Strength of the* LORD GOD: *I will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs,* even *of thine only.*] I will enter notwithſtanding upon this Work, of pondering in my Mind, and publiſhing with my Mouth, the mighty Things which I expect, from the ſole Powers of the great Lord and Governour of all Things: I will not aſcribe them to my own Deſerts, or to the Courage or Fidelity of thoſe few Friends that ſtill adhere to me; but to thy undeſerved Favour, and Faithfulneſs to thy Word; and to that alone will I give the Praiſe.

Ver. 17. *O* GOD, *thou haſt taught me from my Youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous Works.*] O good GOD, thou haſt given me many Inſtances of this kind Power and Faithfulneſs of thine ever ſince I was a Youth: (v. 5.) and from thence unto this preſent Moment thou haſt been doing wonderful Things for my Preſervation and Preferment; which I have not failed to proclaim, and thankfully commemorate.

Ver. 18. *Now alſo when I am old and gray-headed, O* GOD, *forſake me not: until I have ſhewed thy Strength unto* this *Generation, and thy Power to every one* that *is to come.*] And therefore do not now, O GOD, abandon the Care of me, when I need it moſt: but continue the ſame Kindneſs to me in my declining Years, which I found when I was a Youth: and let me ſurvive theſe Calamities, to proclaim thy Power in freſh Inſtances of it to this preſent Generation; and let all Poſterity know how mighty it is, in making a few victorious over very great Multitudes.

Ver. 19. *Thy Righteouſneſs alſo, O* GOD, is *very high, who haſt done great Things: O* GOD, *who* is *like unto thee?*] Which I do not deſpair to ſee, when I conſider how infinitely thy Mercy, O GOD, ſurpaſſes all our Deſerts, nay, Expectations; and what ſtupendious Things thou haſt already done for me, ſuch as have no Example: For who is there, O GOD, that can be compared to thee, either in Goodneſs to deſign well for us, or in Power to do what thou thinkeſt good?

Ver. 20. Thou *which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore Trouble, ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me up again from the Depths of the Earth.*] I never was in ſuch Straits and Diſtreſſes (and yet I have been in the greateſt and ſoreſt) but I found Relief from thee: and therefore I doubt not thou wilt revive me, now that all Men give me up for Dead; and draw me out of this extreme Danger into which I am plunged, and wherein I ſhall periſh without thy Help.

Ver. 21. *Thou ſhalt increaſe my Greatneſs, and comfort me on every Side.*] Nay, thou wilt not only reſtore me to my former Greatneſs, but much augment the Splendour of it: and, tho' now I ſeem forſaken by thee, wilt return again, and ſo ſurround me with thy Favour; that my future Comforts ſhall far exceed my preſent Troubles.

Ver. 22. *I will alſo praiſe thee with the Pſaltery,* even *thy Truth, O my* GOD: *unto thee will I ſing with the Harp, O thou holy one of Iſrael.*] And then ſure I ſhall be no leſs forward to bleſs thee, than thou art to beſtow thy Benefits on me: I will bleſs thee, O my GOD, in the moſt joyful Manner, with the Pſaltery and Harp, and the reſt of my Muſical Inſtruments; which ſhall play to the Songs I will compoſe in Praiſe of thy Faithfulneſs and Conſtancy to thy Word; O thou, whoſe incomparable Excellencies are peculiarly known unto, and celebrated by thy People *Iſrael.*

Ver. 23. *My Lips ſhall greatly rejoice when I ſing unto thee: and my Soul which thou haſt redeemed.*] It is not poſſible to expreſs the Joy wherewith not merely my Lips, but my Heart and Soul ſhall ſing triumphant Songs; for the miraculous Deliverance which I expect from thee.

Ver. 24. *My Tongue alſo ſhall talk of thy Righteouſneſs all the Day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto Shame, that ſeek my Hurt.*] Which ſhall not only be the Subject of my ſolemn Songs, but of my conſtant Diſcourſe; wherein I will perpetually magnifie thy Goodneſs and Truth towards me, and thy juſt Vengeance upon my Enemies: whom I look upon already as utterly defeated; and hanging down their Heads to ſee that Ruin fall upon themſelves, which they deſigned for me.

PSALM LXXII.

A Psalm for *Solomon.*

ARGUMENT.

That David *was the Author of this Psalm, we may be satisfied from the Conclusion of it. From whence we may also gather that it was made by him, towards the Conclusion of his Life. When, by his Command,* Nathan *the Prophet, and* Zadock *the Priest, took* Solomon *and set him upon his Throne,* (1 Kings *I.* 39, &c.) *that* David *might have the Satisfaction to see all the great Men do homage to* Solomon, *and acknowledge him for their succeeding Sovereign before he died: which you find he did, see* 1 Chron. *XXIX.* 24. *And thereupon the Spirit of the holy Man being transported with an extraordinary Joy, he indited this Hymn, and sent it to* Solomon: *wherein he first recommends him to the divine Benediction; and then instructs him how to make his People happy; by describing the Qualities of a good King, and the prosperous State of the Kingdom, under his Government. Which his Eyes began to behold before he died* (1 Chron. *XXIX.* 25.) *and he hoped others should behold when he was gone; to the Example and Admiration of all following Generations. For what we translate in the future Time, as if it were a Prophecy, may be construed to be only a Prayer. Which he carries on in so high a Strain, in some Places, that the Words had not a full Accomplishment in* Solomon, *nor in any one else, till the appearing of that great King* CHRIST. *Of the Happiness of whose Reign, and of the Justice of whose Government; together with the Mightiness, and the Largeness, and the eternal Continuance of his Kingdom, his Father* David *here prophesies.*

Of that there can be no reasonable Doubt; (for the Jews themselves acknowledge it, as appears by the Chaldee Paraphrase, Misdrach Tehillim, *the Book* Siphire, *and many others:) but that in this Psalm he prophesies of nothing else, and hath no Respect to* Solomon, *as* Theodoret *supposes in his Interpretation, seems as far wide from the Truth, as to say, that he looks no farther than* Solomon. *For the Psalm doth in part agree as aptly (if not more) to* Solomon; *as the Name of* Solomon *doth to the* Messiah, *our Saviour* CHRIST. *Who was indeed the Prince of Peace, and left his Peace with his Disciples when he left the World, (as* Theodoret *notes) and made Peace wheresoever his Doctrine was entertained, and his Government settled over Mens Hearts. Yet he is not the only Person here spoken of; but, as St.* Hierom *hath excellently stated the Matter, in* Solomon *himself there was the Shadow and Image of the Truth, which was more perfectly fulfilled in our Lord and Saviour.*

Ver. 1. *GIVE the King thy Judgments, O God, and thy Righteousness unto the King's Son.*] O God, the supreme Judge of the World, bestow I beseech thee upon *Solomon*, who is now anointed to sit on my Throne, such a right Judgment in all Things, and such Uprightness and Integrity of Heart, that he may govern thy People according to thy Laws; and tempering Justice with Mercy, may be a worthy Successor to me, who have now resigned my Charge unto him.

Ver. 2. *He shall judge thy People with Righteousness, and thy Poor with Judgment.*] The Weight of which I know is so exceeding great, that he needs thy special Guidance and Assistance: by which he may be able to administer all Affairs, with such impartial Justice and Clemency; that the poorest Subjects he hath may be as dear unto him, as they are unto thee; and recover their Rights, or be preserved in them, from the Power of those who would oppress them.

Ver. 3. *The Mountains shall bring Peace to the People, and the little Hills, by Righteousness.*] So shall all Parts of the Kingdom be most happy; living in Peace, and enjoying the blessed Fruits of it: while all the Judges of the Land, both great and small, make it their Study to maintain them in their just Rights and Liberties.

Ver. 4. *He shall judge the Poor of the People, he shall save the Children of the needy, and shall break in Pieces the Oppressour.*] And his Authority is not abused to the Oppression of the Poor; and the making those more miserable, who have nothing but Beggary left them for their Inheritance: but imployed for their Defence and Preservation; and for the crushing of those, that by Fraud or Force are injurious to them.

Ver. 5. *They shall fear thee as long as the Sun and Moon endureth, throughout all Generations.*] Which righteous Administration shall redound to his everlasting Honour, and win him such Reverence and Observance from his People; as shall make him a lively Emblem of the great King CHRIST: whose happy Subjects shall never cease to worship and praise him Day and Night to the World's End.

Ver. 6. *He shall come down like Rain upon the mowen Grass: as Showers* that *water the Earth.*] For he shall not endeavour to be formidable to them like a Tyrant, whose Government imitates the Thunder, Storms and Tempests: but condescend most graciously to the meanest: and rule them in so soft and gentle a Manner, as shall make his Authority no less acceptable and beneficial, than the Rain is to the after-grass, or dripping Showers, which fall in the Summer Heat, to refresh the parched Earth.

Ver. 7. *In his Days shall the righteous flourish: and Abundance of Peace, so long as the Moon endureth.*] The Wicked shall have no Preferment in his Days; but righteous and vertuous Men shall grow to a great Height, and flourish as the Plants do after those cherishing Showers: whereby such lasting Peace and Tranquillity shall be established, as nothing can exceed, but the blessed Times of the Prince of Peace, whose Kingdom shall have no End.

Ver. 8. *He shall have Dominion also from Sea to Sea, and from the River unto the Ends of the Earth.*] Nor shall his Empire be confined within the Bounds of *Judea*; but, according to the Promise made to our Fore-father *Abraham*, (*Gen.* XV. 18.) and renewed to his Children,

(*Exod.*

(*Exod.* XXIII. 31. *Deut.* I. 7. XI. 24. *Josh.* I. 3, 4.) he shall extend it from the Red Sea, to the Sea of the *Philistines*, and from the River *Euphrates*, to the Border of *Egypt*, (1 *Kings* IV. 21. 2 *Chron.* IX. 26. *Ezra* IV. 20.) and be the most illustrious Type of that glorious Kingdom of CHRIST, which shall spread it self throughout the World.

Ver. 9. *They that dwell in the Wilderness shall bow before him: and his Enemies shall lick the Dust.*] The most barbarous Nations shall come and do him Homage; and they that refuse it shall be humbled, and forced at last to submit and prostrate themselves with the lowliest Reverence at his Feet.

Ver. 10. *The Kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring Presents: the Kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer Gifts.*] The Kings of the most distant Countries, they of *Tarshish*, (1 *Kings* X. 22.) as well as *Cyprus* and *Crete*, and the rest of the Isles, shall honour him with their Presents; and so shall they of *Arabia*, as far as the *Persian* Gulph, approach him with their Gifts.

Ver. 11. *Yea, all Kings shall fall down before him: all Nations shall serve him.*] Yea, so many Kings and Nations shall make their Obeysance, and subject themselves unto him; that it shall foreshadow the large Extent of the Kingdom of CHRIST, who shall be universally acknowledged, worshipped, and obeyed, by all Kings, and all Nations of the Earth.

Ver. 12. *For he shall deliver the Needy when he crieth: the poor also, and* him *that hath no Helper.*] Nor shall they be induced to these Submissions so much by the Greatness of his Power, the Vastness of his Riches, and the Magnificence of his Court, as by the Fame of his Justice, Mercy and Compassion; (wherein he shall resemble the Lord CHRIST.) For no sooner shall any miserable Wretch, who hath no Friend in the World, implore his Protection, but he shall instantly succour, defend and relieve him.

Ver. 13. *He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the Souls of the Needy.*] He shall take pity upon such helpless Creatures, and add no heavier Burthen unto that of their lamentable Poverty; nor shall he be prodigal of their Lives, but as tenderly secure them as those of his greatest Subjects.

Ver. 14. *He shall redeem their Soul from Deceit and Violence: and precious shall their Blood be in his Sight.*] He shall preserve them from being ruined, either by the Fraud or Violence of those who are too subtle or too mighty for them; and love them so dearly, as never to satisfie his own Ambition, Covetousness, or Revenge, with the Expence of the precious Treasure of their Blood.

Ver. 15. *And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the Gold of Sheba; Prayer also shall be made for him continually,* and *daily shall he be praised.*] Whereby his Reign shall be long and prosperous; and the longer he reigns, the richer Presents shall be brought unto him, (as there shall be to CHRIST, from the Eastern Countries:) together with their perpetual Prayers for his continued Prosperity; and the highest Praises and Commendations, which shall ever be in Mens Mouths, of his just and gracious Government.

Ver. 16. *There shall be an Handful of Corn in the Earth upon the Top of the Mountains; the Fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and* they *of the City shall flourish like Grass of the Earth.*] Which GOD shall bless with such Plenty, that a Handful of Corn sown in the Earth, even upon the Top of barren Mountains, shall spring up so thick, with Ears so plump and full, that when they are shaken with the Wind, they shall make a Noise like the Cedars of *Lebanon*; nor shall the City be less fruitful than the Country, but become as populous and well stored with all good Things, as the Earth is with Grass, or Flowers in the Spring.

Ver. 17. *His Name shall endure for ever: his Name shall be continued as long as the Sun: and* Men *shall be blessed in him; all Nations shall call him blessed.*] His Memory and Fame shall never die, but be propagated from Father to Son, as long as the Sun shall shine; and when they would wish well to another, they shall say, GOD *make thee as happy as Solomon:* For all People that hear of him shall look on him as the most excellent Prince that ever was, except the King *Messiah*, whom all Nations shall magnifie and extol, and above all Things desire his Blessing.

Ver. 18. *Blessed* be *the* LORD GOD, *the* GOD *of Israel, who only doth wondrous Things.*] For which good Hopes, and for all other his Benefits, I renew my Thanks (1 *Chron.* XXIX. 10.) to the great LORD and Sovereign of all the World; who hath graciously chosen *Israel* for his peculiar People: Let him be most heartily blessed and praised, whose Bounty is stupendious, and incomparably beyond all that can be said or thought of it.

Ver. 19. *And blessed* be *his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled* with *his Glory; Amen, and Amen.*] Let his super-eminent Perfections be for ever celebrated with our Praises; and not with ours only, but let the whole World be possessed with a Sense of the surpassing Greatness of his Wisdom, Power and Love, and join together with us in his Praise: Let it be so, let it be so; let us all consent to say again and again, The LORD be praised, the LORD be praised.

Ver. 20. *The Prayers of David the Son of Jesse are ended.*] This was the last Psalm which *David* the Son of *Jesse* composed, not long before he died: (and was all of his that the Collector of this Book could find before he published it.)

The End of the Second Book of Psalms.

The

The Third Book of *Pſalms.*

PSALM LXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins a new Collection of XVII. Pſalms, moſt of them very diſconſolate and full of ſad Complaints, which make up the Third *Book of this Volume, as the* Hebrews *divide it. They were moſt of them compoſed by* Aſaph, *(and but one of them by* David*) though who he was, is not reſolved by Interpreters: who ſuſpect indeed there might be another Author of ſome of theſe Pſalms; but have no other* Aſaph *to name, but* Aſaph the Singer, *who was famous in the Days of* David, 1 Chron. *VI.* 39. *XVI.* 5. 2 Chron. *V.* 12. *And accordingly* Apollinarius *thus deſcants upon the Title,* The Divine Invention of *David* failing in the compoſing of Songs, *Aſaph* aroſe, and by the Divine Spirit reſounded this Hymn. *But it ſeems to me that there is another Perſon of this Name mentioned in the holy Books, (who may be more probably intituled to this Work) called* Aſaph the Seer, *(ſee Pſal.* L.*) who lived in the Days of* Hezekiah, 2 *Chron.* XXIX. 30. *and whoſe Son, I ſuppoſe, was then Recorder,* 2 Kings *XVIII.* 37. Iſa. *XXXVI.* 3. *Some of them indeed (as I ſhall take Notice in due Place) may be thought rather to belong to another* Aſaph *in after-Times: but for the preſent Pſalm (and moſt of the reſt) I can find no Perſon ſo likely to whom it may be intituled, as him now named: who compoſed it, I conceive, either when he ſaw the miſerable Havock which Strangers made among them in the Days of* Ahaz, 2 *Chron. XXVIII.* 17, 18, 19. *XXIX.* 8, 9. *or when* Sennacherib *invaded them, notwithſtanding the Reformation which* Hezekiah *had made: or, which is moſt probable, upon the Occaſion that* David *wrote the* XXXVII. *Pſalm, to comfort himſelf and good Men, when they ſaw the lewder Sort among them thrive and proſper; and the Pious ſometimes ſorely afflicted: quite contrary to the Sanctions of their Law, which promiſed all good Things to thoſe that obſerved it; and threatned the evil to thoſe that broke it. This extremely afflicted his Spirit, and ſtaggered his Faith, till he conſidered the Matter more deeply; and then he broke out into this Meditation, ſaying,*

Ver. 1. *TRuly* God *is good to Iſrael, even to ſuch as are of a clean Heart.*] I will never hereafter, whatſoever Confuſions I behold, queſtion the Juſtice of God's Providence; but conſtantly affirm, that he is not merely juſt, but very good; yea, hath a moſt ſingular Love to his faithful People; who, notwithſtanding the Evils they indure, will never conſent to do any evil.

Ver. 2. *But as for me, my Feet were almoſt gone: my Steps had well nigh ſlipt.*] Time was indeed, when I, even I, who have had ſuch long Experience of his Care over me, began to doubt and ſtagger in my Faith: nay, was in danger to tumble headlong into Unbelief.

Ver. 3. *For I was envious at the fooliſh,* when *I ſaw the Proſperity of the Wicked.*] The Reaſon was, that having a juſt Indignation againſt the Folly, or rather Madneſs of wicked Men, it firſt vext me to ſee them, notwithſtanding their ill Deſervings, in a very flouriſhing Condition; and then tempted me to think it very hard, that ſober Men ſhould not equal, if not exceed them, in ſuch Happineſs: eſpecially when I ſaw no Likelihood that it would end, but that they continue in their Proſperity.

Ver. 4. *For* there are *no Bands in their Death: but their Strength* is *firm.*] For as they carry on all their Deſigns ſmoothly, and meet with no Rub in their Way, nor are in any Danger (ſo great is their Power) to be bound over by humane Juſtice to anſwer for their Crimes, how many ſoever they commit: ſo they are not afflicted with ſore Diſeaſes by the Hand of God, nor brought to their Graves with Pains and Torment; but after a long Life, in firm and vigorous Health, depart eaſily out of the World.

Ver. 5. *They* are *not in Trouble* as other *Men: neither are they plagued like* other *Men.*] Their Life is nothing ſo laborious and toilſome, as that of many honeſt, but poor and wretched Men: and they eſcape untouch'd, or are little hurt by ſuch Calamities as are common to all Mankind.

Ver. 6. *Therefore Pride compaſſeth them about as a Chain: Violence covereth them* as *a Garment.*] Which makes them ſo unſufferably proud, and vainly conceited of themſelves, that they not only tyrannize over their Neighbours, but openly boaſt of the Power they have to do them Miſchief: and glory in all the Violence and Cruelty, whereby they maintain and increaſe their pompous Greatneſs.

Ver. 7. *Their Eyes ſtand out with Fatneſs: they have more than Heart could wiſh.*] In which they pamper themſelves to ſuch an Exceſs, that in their very Countenance they expreſs the haughty Swelling of their Minds and Hearts: which are ſtrangely puffed up, by their being raiſed (not only beyond the Expectation of all other Men; but) far above all that they themſelves at firſt imagined or could deſign.

Ver. 8. *They are corrupt, and ſpeak wickedly* concerning *Oppreſſion: they ſpeak loftily.*] They mock at all thoſe who ſcrupulouſly tie themſelves to the Rules of Juſtice, or tell them of the Danger they run by their Violation: for they threaten to undo all thoſe that oppoſe them; and publickly declare, in the Height of their Arrogance, that they will not be bound by any Laws.

Ver. 9. *They ſet their Mouth againſt the Heavens; and their Tongue walketh through the Earth.*] No, not thoſe of God himſelf, who (with all the inviſible Powers of which Men talk) they ſay is but a Name; which they do not dread: and therefore no wonder if ſuch Blaſphemers of his Majeſty ſpare neither high nor low, but let their Tongues looſe, to abuſe and calumniate whomſoever they pleaſe upon Earth.

Ver.

Ver. 10. *Therefore his People return hither: and Waters of a full* Cup *are wrung out to them.*] And yet, as bad as they are, there is none of them but hath his Followers and Admirers; whom he firſt invites, and then retains, like Beaſts, by filling their Bellies: which abundantly contents them, though others be ſqueezed and oppreſſed, to give them this poor Satisfaction.

Ver. 11. *And they ſay, How doth* God *know? and is there Knowledge in the moſt High?*] Nay, they drink in their Opinions, and join with them in their Impiety, ſaying, How can God know what we do here? or if he do, why ſhould we think that he, who is ſo high, troubles himſelf about our Affairs?

Ver. 12. *Behold, theſe are the Ungodly, who proſper in the World, they increaſe* in *Riches.*] For behold, there are none that contemn him more than theſe Men; and yet he is ſo far from inflicting any Puniſhment on them, that none enjoy ſuch a continued Courſe of Proſperity as they; whoſe Wealth and Power increaſes every Day.

Ver. 13. *Verily I have cleanſed my Heart in vain, and waſhed my Hands in Innocency.*] And verily, if theſe Men diſcourſe aright, I have taken a great deal of Pains to little purpoſe; while I have ſtudiouſly endeavoured to keep my Heart pure from ſo much as ill Deſigns, as well as to refrain the doing of any evil Actions; from the Charge of which I can ſafely purge my ſelf.

Ver. 14. *For all the Day long have I been plagued, and chaſtened every Morning.*] And yet I am plagued perpetually by the reſtleſs Malice of theſe wicked Doers; which, as conſtantly as the Sun riſes, falls on me a deal ſooner than on other Men.

Ver. 15. *If I ſay, I will ſpeak thus: behold, I ſhould offend* againſt *the Generation of thy Children.*] But, whatever confuſed and fooliſh Thoughts came on a ſudden into my Mind, I concluded, upon more mature Deliberation, that if I ſaid as theſe Men do, I ſhould baſely betray the Cauſe of all them, who are truly dear unto thee.

Ver. 16. *When I thought to know this; it was too painful for me.*] And therefore reſolved with my ſelf, before I propounced my Sentence, to ſtudy this Point more ſeriouſly; which at firſt Sight appeared ſo hard, that it grievouſly perplexed me.

Ver. 17. *Until I went into the Sanctuary of* God, *then underſtood I their End.*] And retiring my ſelf into the holy Places, to conſult with thee, and with thoſe to whom thou communicateſt thy Secrets, I was preſently ſenſible how ſhort their Felicity is: unto which Death having put an utter End, it is followed with a diſmal after-Reckoning in another World.

Ver. 18. *Surely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery Places: thou caſtedſt them down into Deſtruction.*] And next I conſidered, that *all* of them do not ſtand ſo firm as they imagine, but merely flatter themſelves with vain Hopes of continuing in their Station to the End of their Days: for being raiſed to the higheſt Preferments, they find them to be very ſlippery Places; from whence, to the Amazement of themſelves, and of all Spectators, they come tumbling down into a moſt horrible Ruin.

Ver. 19. *How are they* brought *into Deſolation as in a Moment! they are utterly conſumed with Terrors.*] Oh what an aſtoniſhing Change is this! which is the more frightful, when on a ſudden the divine Vengeance ſeizes on them; and, when they leaſt expect it, an End is put to their Greatneſs: nay, they are quite deſtroyed, in a moſt terrible manner, as if they had never been.

Ver. 20. *As a Dream when* one *awaketh; ſo, O* Lord, *when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their Image.*] So that it is but a Dream of Happineſs wherein they live, and they pride themſelves in a mere imaginary Glory; which not only vaniſhes away, when thou, O Lord, doſt ariſe to judge them; but becomes as contemptible, in that very City where they appeared in all their Pomp and Splendour, as the fine Things which a Man ſees in his Sleep, are when he awaketh.

Ver. 21. *Thus my Heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my Reins.*] And therefore when my Spirit boiled with Vexation, and grew ſour at the Sight of their Proſperity; (*ver.* 2, 3.) when I was ſo vehemently provoked to paſſionate Complaints, feeling the ſharpeſt Touches of Grief and Anger;

Ver. 22. *So fooliſh* was *I, and ignorant: I was as a Beaſt before thee.*] I now ingeniouſly acknowledge, it was for want of ſuch manly and religious Thoughts as theſe; which ſhould have been in my Mind, when I thought of thy Adminiſtrations; if I had not been dull and ſtupid, as void of Senſe as the Beaſts, which look only at Things before their Eyes, and have no Regard to what is to come, or is not ſeen.

Ver. 23. *Nevertheleſs, I* am *continually with thee: thou haſt holden* me *by my right Hand.*] For if I had looked beyond my Senſes, I might have ſeen that I am under the Care of thy good Providence, and that thou haſt been my Guide and my Supporter, even when I had theſe brutiſh Thoughts, and didſt not ſuffer theſe wicked Men to deſtroy me.

Ver. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy Counſel, and afterward receive me* to *Glory.*] And therefore I ought in all Reaſon ſtill to conclude, That thou wilt direct me to behave my ſelf ſo wiſely, that I ſhall never fall into their Snares: but, after I have ſuffered a while, be preferred to thoſe Dignities from whence they fall; and, which is more, be ſo graciouſly accepted by thee, as to continue in them unto immortal Glory.

Ver. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven,* but thee? *and* there is *none upon Earth,* that *I deſire beſides thee.*] This I expect from thy Almighty Goodneſs, who art the ſole Object of my Hope. For thou knoweſt there is none in Heaven, whom I depend upon for Help and Protection, but thee alone; none upon Earth, whoſe Favour I ſeek, but only thine, which ſhall perfectly content me.

Ver. 26. *My Fleſh and my Heart faileth:* but God is *the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever.*] It is poſſible I may ſtill be preſſed with ſuch ſore Afflictions, that not only my bodily Strength, but alſo my Courage, may begin again to fail me; but then I will recover my ſelf, and fortifie my Soul by flying unto thee, O God, for Safety: in whoſe Love I will alway

think my ſelf happy, and enjoy everlaſting Satisfaction.

Ver. 27. *For lo, they that are far from thee, ſhall periſh: thou haſt deſtroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.*] For there is nothing more certain or more remarkable than this; that they, who, by forſaking thee, have put themſelves far from under thy Care, will never be able, by any other Means, to ſave themſelves from periſhing: For thou haſt already made ſuch Men a terrible Example of thy Diſpleaſure; and utterly deſtroyed thoſe, who, quitting thy Service, have devoted themſelves to the Worſhip of other Gods, 2 *Chron.* XXVIII. 6, 18, 19. XXIX. 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 28. *But it is good for me to draw near to* God: *I have put my Truſt in the* Lord God, *that I may declare all thy Works.*] And therefore I will learn by their Miſcarriages, that it is the beſt and ſafeſt Courſe for me, to adhere to my good God; and to make my humble Addreſſes to him alone. I have done ſo hitherto, and no Danger ſhall tempt me hereafter to quit this Hold, and to confide in any Thing, but only in the Sovereign of the World, who never fails thoſe that depend upon him, and will, I hope, be ſo gracious unto me, that I ſhall have abundant Cauſe to publiſh and proclaim to all others, the Works of his Providence; in preſerving the Good, and in throwing the Wicked down, at laſt, to the Ground.

PSALM LXXIV.

Maſchil *of* Aſaph.

ARGUMENT.

The Deſolation of Jeruſalem *and of the Temple, as well as the reſt of the Country, made by* Nebuchadnezzar *King of* Babylon, *was the ſad Occaſion of this Pſalm. For it is altogether improbable, that it hath Reſpect to the Days of* Antiochus Epiphanes, *as ſome fancy; becauſe, as* Theodoret *pertinently notes, (to omit all other Reaſons) we read nothing in any Hiſtory of his burning the Temple, or ſo much as of his laying the City waſte; which are both here moſt ſorrowfully bewailed by* Aſaph. *Who was not therefore that* Aſaph *in* David's *Time, (unleſs we ſhould grant him to have written by the Spirit of Prophecy, and predicted what ſhould be in after-Times, as a great many think) becauſe there was no ſuch Temple in thoſe Days, nor had been, as is here deſcribed: Nor was it* Aſaph the Seer *in* Hezekiah's *Days, (of whom ſee Argument of the foregoing Pſalm) who ſaw no ſuch Deſolation made by* Sennacherib, *(for he did not take* Jeruſalem, *nor ſhoot ſo much as an Arrow into it) nor, in all Likelihood, propheſied of the Deſtruction here ſpoken of; becauſe the Deſcription of it in this Pſalm is ſo plain, that we may moſt reaſonably think the Author of it had it before his Eyes, and did not merely ſee it by the Spirit of Prophecy; which is not wont to foretel Things in ſo clear a manner, but more obſcurely and darkly.*

I conclude therefore it was ſome other Aſaph *who compoſed this Pſalm, in the Time of the Captivity, and in the middle, or rather toward the Concluſion of it; becauſe he complains,* ver. 9. *that they had no Prophet (as there was in the Beginning of the Captivity, particularly* Jeremiah) *to tell them how long it ſhould laſt. And conſidering that in the* ſecond *Verſe he ſpeaks of himſelf as one that dwelt ſtill in the Land of* Iſrael, *pointing to Mount* Sion *as a Place near to him; I take him to have been ſome pious Man of the Poſterity of* Aſaph, *who was ſuffered to remain there with the* Chaldeans.

And if it were fit to ſuppoſe him to have written this Pſalm very young, and to have lived to a great Age, when I have no Proof of either; I ſhould gueſs him to be Aſaph *the Keeper of the King's Foreſt, in the Days of* Nehemiah: *who deſired* Artaxerxes *to write to him, to furniſh him with Timber out of* Lebanon, *for the rebuilding ſome of thoſe Places, which the Pſalmiſt here complains were deſtroyed. Among which, the Porch of the Court of the Sanctuary remained unbuilt even unto thoſe Times.*

Howſoever, from the Mention of Mount Sion *in the* ſecond *Verſe, it is manifeſt* Grotius *forgot himſelf, when, in his Notes upon* Ver. 6. *he applies this Pſalm to the Deſtruction of* Shiloh; *which he ſuppoſes* Aſaph *to have here bewailed. For Mount* Sion *had then never been in their Poſſeſſion, as it was afterward, and had lain ſo long waſte (*Ver. 3.*) when* Aſaph *wrote this Pſalm, that it look'd like a perpetual Deſolation. Beſides, the* Tabernacle *was not burnt when* Shiloh *was deſtroyed, but remained, tho' without the Ark, till the Days of* Solomon, 2 *Chron.* I. 3. *ſee Pſalm* LXVIII. *And of the Meaning of* Maſchil, *ſee Pſalm* XXXII.

Ver. 1. O God, *why haſt thou caſt us off for ever? why doth thine Anger ſmoke againſt the Sheep of thy Paſture?*] O God, the Sovereign Judge of the World, who haſt juſtly expelled us out of our Land, and continued our Baniſhment ſo long, that little Hope appears of our being reſtored to it again; behold the Anguiſh of our Souls wherein we cry unto thee for Mercy: For we are confounded to ſee thee ſo highly incenſed againſt thoſe, who were once under thy moſt indulgent Care; as if thou wert reſolved never to be reconciled to us any more.

Ver. 2. *Remember thy Congregation which thou haſt purchaſed of old: the Rod of thine Inheritance which thou haſt redeemed, this Mount Sion, wherein thou haſt dwelt.*] Thou haſt not forgotten, we know, tho' it be very long ago, with the Expence of how many Miracles thou didſt make our Anceſtors thy peculiar People: For which Reaſon, though we be exceedingly undeſerving, we beſeech thee to let all the World ſee, Thou wilt not utterly abandon the poor Remainders of that Nation, which thou didſt acquire at ſo great a Price; that Kingdom, which thou didſt reſcue out of the moſt miſerable Slavery, to be thy own Poſſeſſion; and this Mount *Sion*, wherein (after thou hadſt by many Wonders brought us into *Canaan*, and rooted out the old Inhabitants) thou waſt pleaſed at laſt to ſettle thy Abode among us.

Ver. 3. *Lift up thy Feet unto the perpetual Deſolations*: even *all that the Enemy hath done wickedly*

wickedly in the Sanctuary.] Make Haſt, good LORD, to come and viſit the Ruins of our Country and City, which have laſted exceeding long, and will never be repaired without thy powerful Help: which we implore againſt the Authors of them; who, to all the other Miſchiefs they have done, have, with a peculiar Spite, not only defaced, but utterly deſtroyed thy Dwelling-Place.

Ver. 4. *Thine Enemies roar in the midſt of thy Congregations: they ſet up their Enſigns* for *Signs.*] They are *thy* Enemies therefore as well as *ours*, whoſe Fury and Rage ſo tranſports them, that they roar rather than ſhout; whilſt they triumph in thoſe Places where thy People were wont to meet to praiſe thy Name: There they have ſet up their Banners in Token of their Victory; and brag, as if their Gods were ſuperiour unto thee.

Ver. 5. A Man *was famous, according as he had lifted up Axes upon the thick Trees.*] Every one of them laid about him, and beſtirred himſelf with all his Might, as if he hoped to get Renown by the Miſchief he did: which was committed with no more Remorſe, than if they had been lopping off Boughs in the Thickets of a Foreſt, where they may be ſpared.

Ver. 6. *But now they break down the carved Work thereof at once with Axes and Hammers.*] Juſt ſo methinks I ſee (as if it were now a doing) how they hacked and hewed with Axes, and knocked down with Hammers, the curious carved Work of the Temple: whoſe Elegance would have moved any but Barbarians, to have preſerved it with as great a Zeal, as they imployed to beat it in pieces.

Ver. 7. *They have caſt Fire into thy Sanctuary, they have defiled* by caſting down *the Dwelling-Place of thy Name to the Ground.*] But, ſo mad was their Rage, it was not ſatisfied with this; but ſet Fire unto thy holy Place: And what that did not conſume, they pull'd down; till they had utterly profaned the Habitation conſecrated to thy Majeſty, by laying it level with the Ground.

Ver. 8. *They ſaid in their Hearts, Let us deſtroy them together: they have burnt up all the Synagogues of* GOD *in the Land.*] Nor did all this give a Stop unto their Fury; but they rather grew the more outragious: For, deſigning quite to deſtroy our Religion, both in this and in future Generations, they left not ſo much as one Place, wherein we might meet to ſay our Prayers, or hear the Law, throughout the Land.

Ver. 9. *We ſee not our Signs*, there is *no more any Prophet, neither* is there *among us any that knoweth how long.*] And, which is the ſaddeſt Thing of all, thou ſeemeſt to have left us too; and we ſee no Token of thy Divine Preſence with us: So far we are from beholding any miraculous Works, as our Fathers did, for our Deliverance; that there is not ſo much as a Prophet to be found, to give us any Advice, or ſpeak a Word of Comfort to us: not a Man among us, that can tell when theſe Calamities will have an End.

Ver. 10. O GOD, *how long ſhall the Adverſary reproach? ſhall the Enemy blaſpheme thy Name for ever?*] What a Reproach is this, O GOD? which hath quite tired our Patience; and make us cry unto thee to make Haſt, to avenge thy ſelf of theſe inſulting Enemies: Stop their blaſphemous Mouths, O GOD; and let them not ſay any more, as they have done too long, that thou art not able to deliver us.

Ver. 11. *Why withdraweſt thou thy Hand, even thy right Hand? pluck* it *out of thy Boſom.*] For we are confounded, and know not what to ſay, while thou thus withdraweſt thy powerful Preſence from us; that mighty Power which was wont to do ſuch Wonders for us: exert it again, we beſeech thee, and ſtretch it out for the Deſtruction of thoſe, who have ſpoken of it ſo contemptuouſly.

Ver. 12. *For* GOD *is my King of old, working Salvation in the Midſt of the Earth.*] Why ſhould I deſpair of it? ſince the great GOD, whom they deride, hath many Ages ago undertaken the Government and Protection of us: working for us ſuch Deliverances in this Land, which now lies waſte, as aſtoniſhed all the World.

Ver. 13. *Thou didſt divide the Sea by thy Strength: thou brakeſt the Heads of the Dragons in the Waters.*] Thou art that GOD, to whoſe Power the raging Sea is ſubject; which at thy Command retired, and opened a Way for us to paſs thorough; but came back again with its wonted Violence, and overwhelmed the *Egyptians*; who, like ſo many Sea-monſters, thought to have devoured us.

Ver. 14. *Thou brakeſt the Heads of Leviathan in Pieces*, and *gaveſt him* to be *Meat to the People inhabiting the Wilderneſs.*] *Pharaoh*, that fierce Tyrant, as terrible as the vaſteſt Whales, thou didſt utterly deſtroy there; with all his ſtern Captains and Commanders: whom the Sea ſpewed up (*Exod.* XIX. 30.) to find their Tombs in the Bellies of the wild Beaſts and Birds, which people the neighbouring Wilderneſs.

Ver. 15. *Thou didſt cleave the Fountain and the Floud: thou drieſt up mighty Rivers.*] Where, when our Fathers wanted Drink, thou madeſt Water to guſh out of a Rock; (*Exod.* XVII. 6. *Numb.* XX. 9.) which followed them in a full Stream, till they came to the Borders of *Canaan*: And then thou drieſt up the Waters of *Jordan*, at a Time when they ran violently, and (as if many Rivers had been joined in one) it overflowed all its Banks, *Joſh.* III. 15, 17.

Ver. 16. *The Day* is *thine, the Night alſo* is *thine: thou haſt prepared the Light and the Sun.*] And ſtill there are ſuch Inſtances of thy Power, which the whole World, if they would but mind, have alway before their Eyes. For as thou didſt ſometimes change the dry Land into a River, and a River into dry Land; ſo thou doſt continually change the Day into Night, and the Night into Day: having ſettled the Moon to govern the one, and the Sun to govern the other, in their Turns.

Ver. 17. *Thou haſt ſet all the Borders of the Earth: thou haſt made Summer and Winter.*] By thy Almighty Wiſdom alſo it is, that the Motion of the Sun not only makes the Days and Nights; but the different Climates of the Earth, and the Seaſons of the Year: which are

ſome-

ſometimes hot, and ſometimes cold; ſometimes flouriſhing, as we ſee in the Summer, with all manner of Fruit; and ſometimes ſtript, as we ſee in the Winter, of all its Ornaments, that afterward it may be the more fruitful.

Ver. 18. *Remember this,* that *the Enemy hath reproached, O* Lord, *and* that *the fooliſh People have blaſphemed thy Name.*] And we ſure have indured a very tedious Winter; wherein all Things have lookt moſt ruefully. May it pleaſe thee now to return, like the Sun unto us, and let thy Enemies know thou haſt not forgotten how they have reproached thee, O Lord! (whom they ought to have honoured as the mighty Creator of all Things) but wilt vindicate thy Glory, by puniſhing theſe inſolent People, who, fooliſhly puſt up with their Victories, have deſpiſed and derided thy omnipotent Majeſty.

Ver. 19. *O deliver not the Soul of thy Turtle Dove unto the Multitude* of the Wicked, *forget not the Congregation of thy Poor for ever.*] Deliver, we beſeech thee, thy Church, which, like a Turtle Dove, can do nothing but meekly mourn, and make her ſilent Complaints unto thee, from thoſe violent Men, who, like Birds of Prey, ſeek utterly to deſtroy her: Let them not take away its Life and Being; but, though we be at preſent deſerted by thee, yet hear our Cries, and at laſt relieve a poor helpleſs Company, who flee unto thee, and depend upon thee alone for Safety.

Ver. 20. *Have Reſpect unto the Covenant: for the dark Places of the Earth are full of the Habitations of Cruelty.*] Though we are unworthy to be regarded by thee, yet have Regard unto thy own Promiſes; wherein thou haſt engaged thy ſelf unto our Fathers, to give to them and their Poſterity the Land of *Canaan:* which is ſo far from being now inhabited by thy People, that every blind Corner of it is a Den of Thieves and Murtherers; who have filled it with Rapine and Cruelty.

Ver. 21. *O let not the Oppreſſed return aſhamed: let the Poor and Needy praiſe thy Name.*] O let not thy poor afflicted Servant, who implores thy Aid againſt theſe barbarous Oppreſſors, be denied his Suit; and go away aſhamed to ſee himſelf diſappointed of his Hope: but let him, and all the reſt of thy miſerable People, who were never in greater need of thy Help, be reſtored to praiſe thy Goodneſs in their ancient Poſſeſſions; from whence they have been thus long baniſhed.

Ver. 22. *Ariſe, O* God, *plead thine own Cauſe: remember how the fooliſh Man reproacheth thee daily.*] Appear, O God, in our Behalf; and thereby vindicate thy ſelf from Reproach: let me again beſeech thee, to ſhew that thou art not unmindful of all the Scoffs, which proſperous Fools belch out againſt thee every Day.

Ver. 23. *Forget not the Voice of thine Enemies: the Tumult of thoſe that riſe up againſt thee, increaſeth continually.*] It is Time to puniſh all the inſulting Language of thy Enemies: for the inſolent Brags and furious Threats of thoſe that oppoſe thee, increaſe ſtill more and more; and riſe up to a greater Height of audacious Impiety.

PSALM LXXV.

To the Chief Muſician. *Al-taſchith.* A Pſalm or Song of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

I take this Pſalm to have been made by Aſaph the Seer, *mentioned* 2 Chron. *XXIX.* 30. *(ſee* Pſal. *LXXIII.) after the great Deliverance, which, by the ſtrange Deſtruction of* Sennacherib's *Army,* God *gave the good King* Hezekiah. *For whoſe Uſe* Aſaph *compoſed this Pſalm, and delivered it to the Chief Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle; that he might therein make his publick Profeſſion of his Obligations to Almighty* God, *and his Reſolution to ſerve him, and to depend upon him: as he adviſes all Men elſe to do, if they would not be undone; or if they hoped for any Good, of which he is the ſole and abſolute Diſpenſer.*

If Al-taſchith *be more than a Note, that this Pſalm was to be ſung like to the LVII. and thoſe that follow; it may ſignifie as much, as* thou ſhalt not, *or* wilt not deſtroy. *And be applied either to* Sennacherib, *who, the Prophet told them, ſhould not accompliſh his Deſign of deſtroying them, as he had done other Nations,* (2 Kings *XIX.* 17. 2 Chron. *XXVII.* 14.) *or to* God, *who had not given him Commiſſion, as he pretended, to deſtroy* Jeruſalem, (2 Kings *XVIII.* 25.) *but would defend it (*2 Kings *XIX.* 34.) *and not ſuffer it to be laid deſolate.*

Symmachus *gives a more ſpiritual Senſe of the Word, and calls this a* triumphal Song concerning Immortality. *Becauſe it contains, as* Theodoret *explains it, a Prediction of the righteous Judgment of* God *in the Deſtruction of the Wicked, and rewarding the Lovers of Vertue: which ſhould admoniſh us, not to ſuffer any godly Thoughts we have in our Mind to periſh; but to preſerve them whole and intire, that we may inherit Immortality.*

What is to be underſtood by a Pſalm-Song, *ſee in the Argument of* Pſalm *LXVII.*

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee, O* God, *do we give Thanks,* unto thee *do we give Thanks: for that thy Name is near, thy wondrous Works declare.*] Unto thee, O God, the righteous Judge, who art the ſole Author of this great Deliverance, do I and all my People give moſt ſolemn Thanks: Nor can we ever thank thee enough, but we muſt again and again renew our Acknowledgments unto thee; whoſe Almighty Power is ſtill ready at Hand, we clearly ſee by the Wonders thou haſt done, to ſuccour all thoſe, who gratefully commemorate thy Benefits.

Ver. 2. *When I ſhall receive the Congregation, I will judge uprightly.*] And I will not content my ſelf with theſe verbal Praiſes alone; but as ſoon as I ſhall meet with a fit Opportunity, and we can have our ſolemn Aſſemblies again (which by this Invaſion have been interrupted,

2 *Chron.*

2 *Chron.* XXXII. 1.) I will perfect the Reformation which I have begun: and ſee that equal Juſtice be done to all my People; as well as that they be preſerved in thy true Religion.

Ver. 3. *The Earth and all the Inhabitants thereof are diſſolved: I bear up the Pillars of it. Selah.*] The whole Countrey hath been in a miſerable Confuſion; while their Hearts melted with Fear of an utter Deſolation: But as then I ſupported their Spirits, and incouraged the great Men and the Officers to do their Duty (2 *Chron.* XXXII. 6, 7, 8.) ſo I will hereafter eſtabliſh ſuch Magiſtrates and Judges, as ſhall bring all into better Order.

Ver. 4. *I ſaid unto the Fools, Deal not fooliſhly; and to the Wicked, Lift not up the Horn.*] I have told them my Mind already, and do ſtill ſolemnly proclaim and declare, that I will proceed with the utmoſt Severity againſt the Contemners of thy Laws; and therefore I adviſe them not to be ſo madly rude and inſolent: For the proudeſt of them all ſhall know, that it is ſafeſt for them to be more modeſt, than to glory, as they do, in their Impiety; or to boaſt of the Power they have to be injurious to their Neighbours.

Ver. 5. *Lift not up your Horn on high: ſpeak not with a ſtiff Neck.*] Do not vaunt of this, I once more adviſe you, nor bear your ſelves high, as if you would out-brave Heaven it ſelf: be not refractory and ſtubborn, nor arrogantly ſay, that you will have your Way, and that none ſhall curb you.

Ver. 6. *For Promotion* cometh *neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South.*] For which Way ſoever you turn your ſelves, whether to the Eaſt, or to the Weſt, or to the mountainous Deſarts that lie on the North and South of us; in vain do ye think to eſcape the righteous Judgment of GOD.

Ver. 7. *But* GOD *is the Judge: he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another.*] Who being the Sovereign Lord and Governour of the World, eaſily lays thoſe low that proudly exalt themſelves againſt his Authority; and lifts up thoſe that humbly ſubmit themſelves unto him.

Ver. 8. *For in the Hand of the* LORD there is *a Cup, and the Wine is red: it is full of Mixture, and he poureth out of the ſame: but the Dregs thereof, all the Wicked of the Earth ſhall wring them out, and drink* them.] For he never wants Power to inflict the moſt dreadful Puniſhments; which (like an intoxicating Wine, full of ſtupifying Ingredients, that looſens the very Joints, and takes away all a Man's Strength to reſiſt) never fail to have their Effect: And the godly may taſte of them, nay, ſuffer ſorely for a Time; but the heavieſt and moſt grievous Puniſhments (like the Dregs at the Bottom of ſuch Wine) ſhall fall to the Share of all the Wicked of the Land; who ſhall be forced to endure the utmoſt Expreſſions of the Divine Vengeance upon their Sins.

Ver. 9. *But I will declare for ever; I will ſing Praiſes to the* GOD *of Jacob.*] And this I, who am his Miniſter to execute his Judgments, will not ceaſe to declare, as long as I live, that none may pretend Ignorance for their Excuſe: And I will ſing Praiſes unto GOD (who delivered *Jacob* from all evil) not only for his late miraculous Preſervation of us, by his Vengeance on *Sennacherib* (whom he hath made an Example of his Wrath to all proud Contemners of him) but for making me the Inſtrument of ſo happy a Reformation.

Ver. 10. *All the Horns of the wicked alſo will I cut off*; but *the Horns of the righteous ſhall be exalted.*] For this is my Reſolution, not merely, as I ſaid, to praiſe him, but to pull down the haughty Spirit, and cut ſhort all the Power of the wicked, that they ſhall not be able to do ſuch Miſchief as they deſire: and to raiſe the righteous into ſuch Authority, that they ſhall not fear what their moſt inſolent Enemies can do unto them.

PSALM LXXVI.

To the Chief Muſician on *Neginoth.* A Pſalm or Song of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

It is viſible to every Eye, that the Pſalmiſt here commemorates ſome notable Victory, over very powerful Enemies: whereby GOD *delivered (when it was in great Danger) the whole Countrey; particularly* Jeruſalem. *Which is called here* Salem, *Ver.* 2. *by an uſual Form of Speech among the* Hebrews, *who are wont, in Names of Places, to cut off the former Part: inſtead of* Abel-Sittim, *ſaying only* Sittim; *and* Nimrim *for* Beth-Nimrim; Lechi *for* Ramath-Lechi; Sheba *for* Beer-Sheba, *and many ſuch like; as* Bochartus *hath ſhewn in the* Second *Book of his* Phaleg, *Chap.* 25. *and in the* Firſt *Part of his Work concerning the Animals named in Scripture, Book* 2. *Chap.* 25.

And there is as little Reaſon to doubt that the particular Deliverance here aimed at, is that from Sennacherib's *Army; which* Aſaph *the* Seer, *mentioned* 2 Chron. *XXIX.* 30. *(ſee* Pſal. *LXXIII.) was not content to celebrate in the former Hymn, which he made for the Uſe of the King; but added this alſo, for his own Uſe, and all other pious Perſons. Who he hoped would join in it; eſpecially when it was ſung in the Temple, as he directed the Maſter of the Muſick, after the ſame Manner as* Pſal. *IV.*

Some of the Greek *ſeem to have perceived ſomething of this: For though there be no ſuch Title in the antient* Hexaplus *of* Origen; *yet in after-times,* Theodoret *tells us, he found in ſome Copies this Inſcription, which ſtill continues*; An Ode againſt the Aſſyrian: *which* Apollinarius *follows.*

Of a Pſalm-Song, ſee Pſalm *LXVII.*

Ver. 1. IN *Judah is* GOD *known: his Name is great in Iſrael.*] GOD hath ſo illuſtriouſly demonſtrated himſelf among us (in this unexpected and terrible Execution) to be the Sovereign Ruler and Judge of the World; that he muſt ſhut his Eyes that doth not ſee

it: His Power, and all his other glorious Perfections, which are conſpicuous every where, are in no Countrey ſo magnified as they are in *Iſrael*.

Ver. 2. *In Salem alſo is his Tabernacle, and his Dwelling-place in Zion.*] Our Enemies themſelves, who reviled *him*, (2 *Chron.* XXXII. 17, 19.) and deſpiſed *Jeruſalem* (*Ib.* Verſ. 10.) are now ſure convinced, that there this mighty Lord maketh his Abode: in the Top of that Mountain where he hath choſen to fix his Dwelling-Place.

Ver. 3. *There brake he the Arrows of the Bow, the Shield, and the Sword, and the Battle. Selah.*] Before the Walls of which he hath ſlain, with an inviſible Dart, the fiery Archers, (who have not ſhot ſo much as one Arrow into it, 2 *Kings* XIX. 32.) and made the Shields, and Swords, and the reſt of their military Preparations, altogether uſeleſs and unprofitable.

Ver. 4. *Thou* art *more glorious* and *excellent than the Mountains of Prey.*] Whereby thou, O *Sion*, art become more glorious than all the Mountains, where the fierceſt Beaſts of Prey, or the moſt deſperate Robbers have their Reſort: who never made ſuch Slaughters.

Ver. 5. *The ſtout-hearted are ſpoiled, they have ſlept their Sleep: and none of the Men of Might have found their Hands.*] For they, whoſe Courage made them fear no Danger; but confidently promiſed themſelves the Spoils of *Jeruſalem*, are given unto us for a Spoil: They lay down to ſleep, but never awaked; (2 *Kings* XIX. 35.) not a Man among the moſt Mighty of them, was able to ſtrike a Stroke; or do any Thing to defend himſelf againſt that Hand which cut them off.

Ver. 6. *At thy Rebuke, O* God *of Jacob, both the Chariot and Horſe are caſt into a dead Sleep.*] But the moſt experienced Horſeman, as well as they that rode in Chariots, ſunk down dead, at the ſudden Check, the ſevere Rebuke, which they received from thee, O God of *Jacob*, whom they reproached, 2 *Kings* XIX. 22, 23.

Ver. 7. *Thou*, even *thou*, art *to be feared, and who may ſtand in thy Sight when once thou art angry?*] Thou, and none but thou, art to be dreaded: And what King is he, that is able, for ſo ſhort a Time as a Moment, to reſiſt thy Power? which in an Inſtant can deſtroy all thoſe who incur thy heavy Diſpleaſure.

Ver. 8. *Thou didſt cauſe Judgment to be heard from Heaven; the Earth feared, and was ſtill.*] We have an Example of it before our Eyes; for when we made our ſolemn Appeal to thee (2 *Kings* XIX. 3, 4, 15, 16.) Thou waſt pleaſed to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation from Heaven upon our Enemies: which ſtruck ſuch Terror into thoſe that ſurvived, that they who before were full of Rage, and made a tumultuous Noiſe (Ver. 27, 28.) were as ſtill as Lambs; and durſt not ſtir a Foot, but only to return from whence they came, Ver. 28, 36.

Ver. 9. *When* God *aroſe to Judgment, to ſave all the Meek of the Earth. Selah.*] They were afraid to continue their Attempts againſt us, when God, who had long ſuffered their Inſolence, ſent an Angel to chaſtiſe it, and to do Execution upon them; and thereby delivered the helpleſs People of this Land; who had patiently born their horrible Oppreſſion.

Ver. 10. *Surely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee: the Remainder of Wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.*] Which may well be a Warning to all fell Tyrants, not to be ſo fierce and outragious, which will only preſent thee with the fairer Opportunity to glorifie thy ſelf, and raiſe thy Praiſe to a greater Height; as thou haſt now done, by ſuppreſſing the *Aſſyrians* Fury: who if they have any Reliques of Wrath, which may boil up again in their Hearts; thou ſhalt chain it up, and not ſuffer it to break forth to our further Diſturbance.

Ver. 11. *Vow, and pay unto the* Lord *your* God; *let all that are round about him, bring Preſents unto him that ought to be feared.*] And let this excite you all, who are thus marvellouſly delivered, to make more liberal Promiſes of grateful Sacrifices; as well as to perform thoſe which you have already vowed, to the great Lord, your moſt gracious God: who ſo far excels all others, that the Nations round about us, who hear the Fame of this, ſhall reproach you (if you be forgetful of his Benefits) by the Preſents which they ſhall make to him, (2 *Chron.* XXXII. 23.) who ought to be feared by all his Friends, and is moſt terrible to his Enemies.

Ver. 12. *He ſhall cut off the Spirit of Princes: he is terrible to the Kings of the Earth.*] For he can eaſily, with a ſudden Stroke, not only take down the proud Stomach, but take away the Life of the fierceſt Captains and Commanders, (2 *Chron.* XXXII. 21.) yea, make the greateſt Monarchs (who keep the World in Awe) quake and tremble at his dreadful Executions.

PSALM LXXVII.

To the Chief Muſician, to *Jeduthun.* A Pſalm of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

A Pſalm compoſed by Aſaph, *and ſent by him to that Song-Maſter, who was over the Children of* Jeduthun; *in which I imagined at firſt Sight, that he repreſented the ſad Condition of* Hezekiah, *and the Motions of his Heart towards* God *in his Sickneſs,* 2 Chron. *XXXII.* 24. Iſa. *XXXVIII.* 1. *But, upon further Conſideration, it appears from the latter Part of it, that he bewails the Calamity of all the Nation: either when* Sennacherib *over-ran the Countrey; or elſe in the Captivity of* Babylon. *If we refer it to the latter, then it was not* Aſaph *the* Seer, *whom I mentioned before, Pſalm LXXIII. that made this Pſalm; but ſome other in after-times (ſee* Pſalm *LXXIV.) who laments the long Continuance of their Captivity: which looked like an utter forſaking by* God; *but he comforts himſelf at laſt with the Remembrance of what* God *had done formerly for them, when he delivered them out of the* Egyptian *Bondage.*

Ver.

Ver. 1. *I cried unto* God *with my Voice: even unto* God *with my Voice, and he gave Ear unto me.*] I have incessantly made my Prayer to God, and I will still most earnestly intreat his Favour: To him who hath justly afflicted us, and can alone relieve us, have I again and again renewed my importunate Suit; which I hope will at last prevail with him for Deliverance.

Ver. 2. *In the Day of my Trouble I sought the* Lord; *my Sore ran in the Night, and ceased not: my Soul refused to be comforted.*] I have not negligently discharged this Duty, but as the Distress is great wherein we are, so I have restlessly implored Help from the Lord: In the Night, when Men are wont to bury their Troubles in Sleep, I have with unwearied Diligence, spread out my Hands unto him, (in Token that all my Dependance is upon his Power alone) resolving to admit of no Consolation, till I obtained a gracious Answer from him.

Ver. 3. *I remembred* God *and was troubled: I complained, and my Spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.*] I remembred indeed, how kind God had been unto us in former Times; but this only gave me the greater Trouble, when I compared it with our present Miseries; and the more I mused on it, the more my Spirit was disturbed, and miserably afflicted.

Ver. 4. *Thou holdest mine Eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.*] Insomuch that I could not close my Eyes, to take a Wink of Sleep; nor open my Mouth (such was my Perturbation and Astonishment) to express the Heavines of my Grief.

Ver. 5. *I have considered the Days of old, the Years of ancient Times.*] All that I could do, was to recount thy merciful Providences over our Forefathers in Times past; and ponder seriously what Wonders thou didst for them, many Ages agone.

Ver. 6. *I call to Remembrance my Song in the Night, I commune with mine own Heart, and my Spirit made diligent Search.*] I called to mind all the Songs I had indited, to celebrate the Memory of those ancient Benefits: and spent whole Nights in silent Meditations, and diligent Inquiries, which I revolved to and fro in my Mind; why he who had taken such Care of our Ancestors, had so long rejected us.

Ver. 7. *Will the* Lord *cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?*] Will the Lord, thought I, abandon us for ever? Is he so incensed against us, that he will never be reconciled, nor intend to shew us any more Favour?

Ver. 8. *Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? doth his Promise fail for evermore?*] Is his infinite Mercy, which is the Fountain of all his Benefits, quite exhausted? and will he never hereafter speak a Word of Comfort to us?

Ver. 9. *Hath* God *forgotten to be gracious? hath he in Anger shut up his tender Mercies? Selah.*] Hath God, whose Property it is to shew Mercy, quite laid aside all Thoughts of exercising his Clemency towards us? or have we so highly provoked him to Anger, that he hath no Regard at all unto our Miseries?

Ver. 10. *And I said, This is my Infirmity: but I will remember the Years of the right Hand of the most High.*] But having thus complained, and said within my self, This is the Thing which sorely afflicts me, to see such Alterations in the Proceedings of the most High, that the same Hand which formerly protected us, now severely scourges us;

Ver. 11. *I will remember the Works of the* Lord: *surely I will remember thy Wonders of old.*] I presently considered, that there might be a Change again: and resolved to comfort my self with the Remembrance of the former Works of the Lord; and to go back as far as the Miracle thou didst for us, (in bringing us up out of the Land of *Egypt*) when our Deserts were as small as in these Days.

Ver. 12. *I will meditate also of all thy Work, and talk of thy Doings.*] Of all the ensuing Wonders I will think, rather than on our present Miseries: I will not omit one of them; but, instead of these Complaints, make them the constant Subject of my Discourse.

Ver 13. *Thy Way, O* God, *is in the Sanctuary: who is so great a* God *as our* God?] From which I cannot but conclude, that the Method of thy Providence, O God, is not only perfectly holy and just, but quite out of our Reach: nor is thy Power inferiour; but, as thou dost not proceed in the common Way of our Thoughts, so none can resist what thy incomparable Majesty thinks fit to effect.

Ver. 14. *Thou art the* God *that doest Wonders; thou hast declared thy Strength among the People.*] For thou art the mighty God, who canst do Miracles, as easily as the most ordinary Works: and hast made all the World sensible, that thy Power exceeds both the Strength and the Opinion of all Creatures.

Ver. 15. *Thou hast with* thine *Arm redeemed thy People, the Sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.*] Having delivered thy People, descended from *Jacob*, and miraculously preserved by *Joseph*, from the *Egyptian* Bondage; by a long Series of stupendious Judgments upon *Pharaoh* and his Servants, *Exod.* VI. 6. *Deut.* VI. 21, 22. VII. 8.

Ver. 16. *The Waters saw thee, O* God, *the Waters saw thee: they were afraid, the Depths also were troubled.*] Which were followed presently with a greater Wonder, when the Waters of the Red Sea felt thy Power, O God: They felt thy Power to the very Bottom of them; which so disturbed them, that they retreated, as if they had been affrighted at thy Presence; and left a plain Way for thy People to march through upon dry Ground:

Ver. 17. *The Clouds poured out Water, the Skies sent out a Sound: thine Arrows also went Abroad.*] But returned again upon the *Egyptians* (who pursued after us) accompanied with a terrible Storm of Rain, and Thunder, and Hailstones; which flew about their Ears, and break the very Wheels of their Chariots, *Exod.* XIV. 24, 25.

Ver. 18. *The Voice of thy Thunder was in the Heaven: the Lightnings lightned the World, the Earth trembled and shook.*] The Noise of this

this Thunder filled all the Air thereabout; and ſo did the Lightning that flaſhed in their Faces: which, together with a dreadful Earthquake, made the very Inhabitants of *Canaan* tremble, *Joſh.* II. 10, 11.

Ver. 19. *Thy Way is in the Sea, and thy Path in the great Waters, and thy Footſteps are not known.*] We might well ſay then, that thy Way is quite out of our Reach; (Ver. 13.) who madeſt a Paſſage through the Sea, a broad Path through the boiſterous Waters: which as none ever trod before or after, ſo they cannot trace the Footſteps, which the Waters have overflown and obliterated, *Exod.* XIV. 26, 27.

Ver. 20. *Thou leddeſt thy People like a Flock, by the Hand of Moſes and Aaron.*] Nor did thy Care over thy People end there, but by the Miniſtry of thy Servants, *Moſes* and *Aaron*, thou didſt conduct them with the ſame Tenderneſs that a good Shepherd doth his Sheep; through a horrid Wilderneſs; in which thou feddeſt them, till they came to *Canaan*. [And thither the ſame Power can, and the ſame Goodneſs will, I hope, reſtore us: though now we ſeem neglected by thee, as our Fathers were, for a Time, in the Land of *Egypt*.]

PSALM LXXVIII.

Maſchil *of* Aſaph.

ARGUMENT.

When God *gave his Law to the* Iſraelites, *he commanded them, not only to be careful to ſtudy it themſelves, but to inculcate it upon their Children, (as the Pſalmiſt here remembers,* Ver. 5.) *that they might propagate the Knowledge of it to all future Generations,* Deut. *IV.* 9. *VI.* 7, 8, &c. *XI.* 18, 19, &c. *And particularly to inſtruct them in the Reaſon of their Feaſts; which were appointed for the Commemoration of ſeveral Benefits, which he would not have forgotten,* Exod. *XIII.* 8, 14. *In Proſecution of which End, as* Theodoret *well obſerves, this Pſalm was indited, by the Prophetical Grace (as his Words are); that they and all their Poſterity might preſerve in Mind the wonderful Works of* God. *An Epitome of which (for the Help of their Memory) he here preſents them withal; from the Time of their Coming out of* Egypt, *till* David's *Promotion to the Throne.*

Where this Narration concluding, it makes it probable this Pſalm was compoſed by that Aſaph, *ſo often mentioned, as one of the principal Singers in thoſe Days: who, ſetting before the Peoples Eyes, as in a Table, the Benefits their Fathers had received, with their ſhameful Ingratitude, and the Puniſhments inflicted upon them for it, teaches and inſtructs them who ſucceeded (for which Reaſon ſome will have it called* Maſchal, *ſee* Pſal. *XXXII.*) *to learn greater Gratitude and Fidelity to their Benefactor: for fear they ſhould incur his higher Diſpleaſure, if they did not beware by ſuch ſad Examples.*

Ver. 1. *GIVE Ear, O my People, to my Law: incline your Ears to the Words of my Mouth.*] Attend reverently, O my Countrymen, for whom I have a particular Affection, unto the Admonition, which now I intend to give you: liſten diligently, I beſeech you, to the following Inſtruction.

Ver. 2. *I will open my Mouth in a Parable: I will utter dark Sayings of old:*] It is no vulgar Leſſon which I would have you learn; nor will I be ſparing in my Inſtruction: but I will abundantly inform you in the moſt remarkable Paſſages of God's Providence in former Times; which are more worthy your Knowledge, than the Skill of reſolving the darkeſt Riddles.

Ver. 3. *Which we have heard and known, and our Fathers have told us.*] And I will not report uncertain or doubtful Things to you; or Things done in another Nation: But ſuch as are of unqueſtionable Credit; which you have heard and known to be recorded in your holy Books; and our Foreſathers, who were Eye-witneſſes of them, have faithfully regiſtred and tranſmitted unto us.

Ver. 4. *We will not hide* them *from their Children, ſhewing to the Generation to come the Praiſes of the* Lord; *and his Strength, and his wonderful Works that he hath done.*] Who will not be ſo treacherous as to loſe the Memory of them in our Days; but diligently propagate them to Poſterity: endeavouring that all future Generations may underſtand, how much the Lord deſerves to be praiſed, for the mighty and ſtupendious Works which he hath done in former Ages.

Ver. 5. *For he eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known to their Children.*] And indeed, when God gave us the Law, he ſtrictly charged our Fore-fathers, and made a particular Injunction about it, which he frequently repeated; (*Deut.* IV. VI. XI. *ſee the Argument*) that they ſhould be careful to leave the Knowledge of theſe Things as a ſacred Legacy, or Inheritance, unto their Children.

Ver. 6. *That the Generation to come might know* them, even *the Children* which *ſhould be born:* who *ſhould ariſe and declare* them *to their Children.*] In order to the conveying them, by their Hands, to the next Generation; who were then unborn: who ſhould be taught alſo, when they were grown up, to deliver them with the ſame Diligence to their Deſcendants; and ſo preſerve the Memory of them to all ſucceeding Generations.

Ver. 7. *That they might ſet their Hope in* God, *and not forget the Works of* God: *but keep his Commandments:*] To the End, that they might learn by ſuch wonderful Inſtances of his powerful Goodneſs, to adhere unto him, and confide in him alone; and by the conſtant Commemoration of his Benefits, be provoked religiouſly to obſerve his Precepts.

Ver. 8. *And might not be as their Fathers, a ſtubborn and rebellious Generation; a Generation that ſet not their Heart aright: and whoſe Spirit*

Spirit was not ſtedfaſt with God.] And take Warning by the Puniſhments inflicted on them, not to imitate the Ingratitude of their Forefathers, who were not only a refractory Generation, but ſo fickle, that they fell off from God to the Worſhip of Idols, preſently after they came out of *Egypt*: For they did not lay to Heart what he had done for them, and ſo were never rightly diſpoſed to his Service; or if in a good Fit they were inclined to it, they ſoon revolted from him.

Ver. 9. *The Children of Ephraim* being *armed, and carrying Bows, turned back in the Day of Battle.*] What could be more ſhameful, than their baſe Refuſal to go and ingage the *Canaanites*, when they were ſo well appointed for the Fight? and were commanded by God, in whoſe Power they had no Confidence, to go up and take Poſſeſſion of the Land? (*Deut.* I. 26.) unleſs it were their foul Cowardice when they did ingage them againſt his Command; (*Deut.* I. 43, 44.) and the *Ephraimites* themſelves, though a valiant Tribe, and excellent Archers, ran away, and were chaſed in a ſhameful manner by their Enemies.

Ver. 10. *They kept not the Covenant of* God, *and refuſed to walk in his Law.*] For they brake their Word with God, (who therefore would not be with them, *Numb.* XIV. 43.) and would not be governed by *his* Will, but by their own.

Ver. 11. *And forgat his Works, and his Wonders that he had ſhewed them.*] Never thinking of the illuſtrious Works, which their Eyes had ſeen; and ſo diſtruſting his Power, notwithſtanding all the Miracles, whereby he had demonſtrated the Greatneſs of it to them.

Ver. 12. *Marvellous Things did he in the Sight of their Fathers, in the Land of Egypt, in the Field of Zoan.*] Nor were the next Generation any better; though the Memory was then freſh of that Heap of Wonders, which their Fathers ſaw him do publickly: not in a Corner, but in all the Land of *Egypt*: yea, in and about the principal City of the Kingdom.

Ver. 13. *He divided the Sea, and cauſed them to paſs through, and he made the Waters to ſtand as an Heap.*] From whence when he had delivered them, and they were in great Diſtreſs at the Red Sea; he made it give Way to them, that they might walk through it on dry Ground: the fluid Waters ſwelling into little Hills (*Exod.* XV. 8.) which ſtood like a ſolid Wall on either Hand, to ſecure them in that dangerous Paſſage (*Exod.* XIV. 22.)

Ver. 14. *In the Day-Time alſo he led them with a Cloud, and all the Night with a Light of Fire.*] Through which he conducted them, as he did at all other Times, by a glorious Cloud: whoſe dark Side ſerved alſo in the Day-Time, for a Shadow from the ſcorching Rays of the Sun; and its bright Side in the Night, for a Torch to guide them when they travelled; or if they reſted, to light them in their Tents.

Ver. 15. *He clave the Rocks in the Wilderneſs, and gave* them *Drink as out of the great Depths.*] And when they wanted Water in the Wilderneſs, he brought it out of the Rocks (which he commanded *Moſes* to ſmite more than once) firſt at *Rephidim*, (*Exod.* XVII. 6.) and then in *Kadeſh*, (*Numb.* XX. 8, 11.) And they had it in ſuch Plenty, both for themſelves and their Cattle, as if it had been a great Pond or Lake.

Ver. 16. *He brought Streams alſo out of the Rock, and cauſed Waters to run down like Rivers.*] And yet it was no ſtanding, but a flowing Water; which ran continually out of the dry Rock, as out of its Fountain, in ſeveral Streams: or rather, like unto Rivers; which followed them in their Travels.

Ver. 17. *And they ſinned yet more againſt him, by provoking the moſt High in the Wilderneſs.*] But all theſe miraculous Works did not alter their depraved Nature, which broke out into new and greater Provocations; in that very Place, where, without the ſingular Providence of their moſt high Benefactor, they had all been ſtarved.

Ver. 18. *And they tempted* God *in their Heart, by asking Meat for their Luſt.*] For they were not content with the bountiful Proviſion which he had made for them, (*Exod.* XVI.) but muttered within themſelves againſt him: And wiſht, if he was ſo powerful and kind as was pretended, that he would give them a new Proof of it; by ſending them Meat to ſatisfie their wanton Appetite.

Ver. 19. *Yea, they ſpake againſt* God: *they ſaid, Can* God *furniſh a Table in the Wilderneſs?*] And at laſt, they openly declared that Diſtruſt of his Power, which was in their Hearts; ſaying, Is God able to make us a Feaſt here in this barren Wilderneſs? *Numb.* XI. 4, 5, &c.

Ver. 20. *Behold, he ſmote the Rock that the Waters guſhed out, and the Streams overflowed; can he give Bread alſo? can he provide Fleſh for his People?*] It is true, he hath brought Water out of a Rock for us in great Abundance; (which perhaps was lodged there before in the Caverns of it, and might have flowed out of it ſelf) but can he give us more ſubſtantial Bread, (not ſuch light Stuff as this Manna is, which he alſo hath ſent us, *Numb.* XI. 6.) here where no Corn grows? and make an ample Proviſion for all this Multitude, of ſuch Fleſh as this Place doth not afford?

Ver. 21. *Therefore the* Lord *heard* this, *and was wroth, ſo a Fire was kindled againſt Jacob, and Anger alſo came up againſt Iſrael;*] Which rude and inſolent Language highly incenſed the Divine Diſpleaſure; ſo that he ſent Lightning from Heaven (*Numb.* XI. 1.) to conſume thoſe whom he had before cheriſhed: and he reſolved alſo to puniſh them more ſeverely, before he had done with them (Ver. 33.)

Ver. 22. *Becauſe they believed not in* God, *and truſted not in his Salvation:*] Becauſe they had ſo mean an Opinion of him, that they durſt not confide in him, and commend themſelves to his good Providence; to preſerve and conduct them ſafe to *Canaan*.

Ver. 23. *Though he had commanded the Clouds from above, and opened the Doors of Heaven,*] No, not after ſuch extraordinary Benefits, as they had received from him: for he had under-

taken in a miraculous manner (as is fit to be more particularly remembred) to diſpenſe Food to them from above; and to make the Clouds their Granary, whoſe Doors he opened to them.

Ver. 24. *And had rained down Manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the Corn of Heaven.*] And, inſtead of Rain (to make the Earth with long Labour become fruitful) to ſend Showers of Manna out of the Air, (*Exod.* XVI. 4.) which was a Kind of Corn ready prepared for them, *Numb.* XI. 8, 9.

Ver. 25. *Man did eat Angels Food: he ſent them Meat to the full.*] There was not a Man among that vaſt Multitude, but was fed with that ſtrong and hearty, or rather Princely Food; brought to them from the Habitation, and by the Miniſtry of Angels. This was their daily Entertainment, as long as their Travels in the Wilderneſs laſted; and they had it in ſuch Abundance, that none of them could pretend they were not ſufficed, *Exod.* XVI. 16, 17, 35.

Ver. 26. *He cauſed an Eaſt-Wind to blow in the Heaven: and by his Power he brought in the South-Wind.*] And therefore it was not to ſatisfie their Hunger, but to reprove their Unbelief, that he was pleaſed to comply with their Deſires; and, when the Wind blew violently out of the Eaſt, turned it by his Power into the South:

Ver. 27. *He rained Fleſh alſo upon them as Duſt, and feathered Fowls like as the Sand of the Sea.*] Which brought a great Cloud of Quails (a delicious Bird) from the Coaſts about the Red Sea: which (either tired with long Flight, or beaten down with the Wind) came pouring down like Showers of Rain; and lay on the Ground, as thick as the Duſt or the Sand on the Sea-ſhore, from whence they came, *Numb.* XI. 31.

Ver. 28. *And he let* it *fall in the midſt of their Camp, round about their Habitations.*] There was no need of Labour, or of any Art to catch them; neither needed they go far to take them up: for they dropt down in the midſt of their Camp; and lay alſo many Miles round it in ſuch Heaps, that they, who would, might fetch enough to ſerve them for a whole Month, *Numb.* XI. 20, 31.

Ver. 29. *So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own Deſire.*] So they had not only a Taſte of his Liberality; but were glutted and crammed with them: for he ſatisfied their Longings to the full.

Ver. 30. *They were not eſtranged from their Luſt: but while the Meat* was *yet in their Mouths,*] And they were not hindred from eating as much as they pleaſed; nor was this Diet become at all nauſeous to them: but they greedily feaſted on theſe Birds to the End of the Month; and at that very Time had theſe ſweet Morſels in their Mouths, (*Numb.* XI. 33.)

Ver. 31. *The Wrath of* God *came upon them, and ſlew the fatteſt of them, and ſmote down the choſen* Men *of Iſrael.*] When the Divine Vengeance ſeized on them, by a very great Peſtilence: (*Numb.* XI. 33.) which ſwept away the ſtrongeſt and goodlieſt Perſons that were in *Iſrael.*

Ver. 32. *For all this they ſinned ſtill: and believed not for his wondrous Works.*] But theſe Puniſhments wrought no more Change in their Hearts, than his Benefits: for they added new Sins to all the former; and were not moved by any of his wonderful Works, to believe that he was able to bring them into the Land of Promiſe, *Numb.* XIV. 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 33. *Therefore their Days did he conſume in Vanity, and their Years in Trouble.*] For which Cauſe he reſolved they ſhould never come thither, but be conſumed in the Wilderneſs: (*Numb.* XIV. 28, 33, *&c.*) Where, though they travelled up and down very much and long, yet it was to no purpoſe; for they were never the nearer to their Journeys End; nor were ever free from one Plague or other, till they were utterly deſtroyed.

Ver. 34. *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him: and they returned and enquired early after* God.] They relented indeed ſometimes; and when God cut off ſome of them, the reſt began to deprecate his Diſpleaſure: (*Numb.* XIV. 39, 40.) and by promiſing Amendment, moſt earneſtly ſought to recover his Favour.

Ver. 35. *And they remembred that* God *was their Rock, and the High* God *their Redeemer.*] And profeſſed that they would truſt in God hereafter for Safety and Deliverance: who they acknowledged was ſuperior to all other Gods, and had been their mighty Redeemer.

Ver. 36. *Nevertheleſs they did flatter him with their Mouth, and they lyed unto him with their Tongues.*] But all this was little more than ſpeaking him fair, while they lay under his correcting Hand: and they did not ſincerely intend to do as they promiſed, when it was removed.

Ver. 37. *For their Heart was not right with him, neither were they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant.*] For their Hearts were not rightly diſpoſed, nor firmly reſolved to adhere unto him; as appears by their frequent Revolts from their Engagements; which they never faithfully obſerved, but as conſtantly broke, as they renewed their Covenant with him, *Numb.* XVI. 3. XX. 3, 4. XXI. 5, 7. XXV. 1, 2, *&c.*

Ver. 38. *But he* being *full of Compaſſion, forgave their Iniquity, and deſtroyed* them *not; yea, many a Time turned he his Anger away, and did not ſtir up all his Wrath.*] Yet he was ſo full of Compaſſion, that, after he had threatned utterly to deſtroy them, (*Numb.* XIV. 11, 12.) he remitted very much of the Severity of the Sentence: and did not cut them off at once, (*Ib.* Ver. 15, 17, 18.) but very often ſpared them when they deſerved to be puniſhed; or, when he puniſhed them, did it leſs than their Deſerts.

Ver. 39. *For he remembred that they* were but *Fleſh: a Wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again.*] For he conſidered how frail they were, and that they could not continue long (tho' he did not ſnatch them away) but would moulder of themſelves into Duſt; and vaniſh like a Blaſt of Wind, which makes a Buſtle and Noiſe for a little Time, and then is diſperſed and heard of no more.

Ver. 40. *How oft did they provoke him in the Wilderneſs,* and *grieve him in the Deſert?*] How many Times, before this terrible Threatning,

ning, did they provoke him to Anger in the Wilderness? (*Numb.* XIV. 22.) and afterward did Things exceeding offensive to him, in other Parts of the Desert? *Numb.* XVI. XX. XXI. XXV.

Ver. 41. *Yea, they turned back and tempted* GOD, *and limited the holy One of Israel.*] Being so vilely ungrateful, as to talk of returning into *Egypt*, (*Numb.* XIV. 4.) or requiring, upon every Occasion, new Proofs of his Power: Nay, questioning whether he could do all Things, though he had wrought so many Wonders; and appointing him, who had so often shewn himself to be incomparably greater than all other Gods, what he should do (as I had before, Ver. 19, 20.) if he intended to have them believe on him.

Ver. 42. *They remembred not his Hand, nor the Day when he delivered them from the Enemy.*] For they quite forgot (this was the Reason of their Naughtiness, ver. 11, 12. which is fit again to be repeated) or never laid to Heart, the mighty Things he had done for them: especially that memorable Time, when he, by his Power alone, delivered them from the Tyranny of *Pharaoh*, who most miserably oppressed them.

Ver. 43. *How he had wrought his Signs in Egypt, and his Wonders in the Field of Zoan:*] They did not seriously ponder the evident Demonstration he gave of his uncontrolable Power, in the miraculous Judgments which he sent upon the *Egyptians*; even upon the Court of *Pharaoh*, and the principal City of the Kingdom.

Ver. 44. *And had turned their Rivers into Bloud; and their Floods, that they could not drink.*] When, for Instance, he left them no Water to quench their Thirst, by turning the River *Nile* (*Exod.* VII. 17, 19, 20.) with all the Streams that were derived from it, and all their Ponds and Pools of Water, into Bloud.

Ver. 45. *He sent divers Sorts of Flies among them, which devoured them; and Frogs, which destroyed them.*] And sent an infinite Swarm of the most pestilent (and to them the most odious Sort of Flies, *Exod.* VIII. 21, 22.) which Bit the *Egyptians*, as they used to do their Dogs: As not long before he had sent such an Army of Frogs to invade all Places, (*Exod.* VIII. 3, 8, 9, *&c.*) and so to spoil their Meat and Drink, and every Thing else; that if this Plague had lasted, they must have left their Country, or not have lived.

Ver. 46. *He gave also their increase unto the Caterpillar, and their Labour unto the Locust.*] After which he exposed the Fruits of the Earth, for which they had taken long Pains, to be devoured by various Kinds of Locusts; with which the whole Countrey was so overspread, that nothing else but they were to be seen upon the Face of the Earth, (*Exod.* X. 5.)

Ver. 47. *He destroyed their Vines with Hail, and their Sycomore-trees with Frost.*] Which had been miserably harassed before, by Storms of Hail, both small and great: whereby not only the Grapes and such like Fruit were smitten down, but the Trees themselves (for Instance, the Vines, and the wild Fig-trees) quite killed, and corrupted at the very Root, *Exod.* IX. 18, 19, 25.

Ver. 48. *He gave up their Cattle also to the Hail, and their Flocks to hot Thunder-bolts.*] For there was a dreadful Thunder, and Lightning mixt together with it, which let no living Creature escape, but destroyed even the Cattel and the Flocks, which were left abroad in the Field, *Exod.* IX. 22, 23, *&c.*

Ver. 49. *He cast upon them the Fierceness of his Anger, Wrath, and Indignation, and Trouble, by sending evil Angels among them.*] Many other Ways he plagued them, which were Tokens of his severest Displeasure; by a grievous Murrain, by fiery Boils, by a most dismal Darkness, (*Exod.* IX. 10.) till at length he sent evil Angels, (who had frighted them in that Darkness, *Wisd.* XVII. 3.) as the Ministers of his heavy Wrath.

Ver. 50. *He made a Way to his Anger, he spared not their Soul from Death, but gave their Life over to the Pestilence.*] Which irresistably and speedily seized on them, wheresoever he found them; and spared not their Lives: but took away the First-born of all their Cattel by a pestilential Disease, *Exod.* XII. 30.

Ver. 51. *And smote all the first-born in Egypt: the Chief of their Strength in the Tabernacles of Ham.*] As well as the First-born of all their Children, (the Prop of their Families, in whom the Hope of future Succession was principally laid) throughout the Dwellings of the Posterity of *Cham*, the Father of the *Egyptians*, (*Gen.* X. 6. *Exod.* XII. 30.)

Ver. 52. *But made his own People to go forth like Sheep, and guided them in the Wilderness like a Flock.*] And by that Means brought forth his People from among them (*Exod.* XII. 51.) as peaceably as a Shepherd doth his Sheep out of their Folds (not so much as a Dog moving his Tongue against them, *Exod.* XI. 7.) and then directed them the Way they should go in the Wilderness, (*Exod.* XIII. 18, 21.) where he graciously provided for them.

Ver. 53. *And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the Sea overwhelmed their Enemies.*] He conducted them securely, even through the Red Sea, without any Apprehension of Danger, (*Exod.* XIV. 19, 22.) but overwhelmed *Pharaoh* and his Followers, in that very Path where *they* travelled in Safety.

Ver. 54. *And he brought them to the Border of his Sanctuary, even to this Mountain which his right Hand had purchased.*] And never ceased his Care over them (notwithstanding all their Provocations) till he brought them into his holy Land; and (in the Issue) to this Mount *Sion*; which, not their Prowess, but his mighty Power, by the Hand of *David*, won for them, 2 *Sam.* V. 6, *&c.*

Ver. 55. *He cast out the Heathen also before them; and divided them an Inheritance by Lot: and made the Tribes of Israel to dwell in their Tents.*] And, after he had expelled the old Inhabitants, who were not able to stand before them (*Josh.* XII.) he distributed by Lot, to every Tribe their Portion of Land, which they should inherit (*Josh.* XIV.) and settled them in a quiet Possession of it, *Josh.* XXI. 43, 44.

Ver. 56. *Yet they tempted and provoked the most high* GOD: *and kept not his Testimonies,*]

Yet,

Yet, after ſo many, and ſo great Benefits, they behaved themſelves no better, in that good Land, than they had done in the Wilderneſs: but as ſoon as *Joſhua* and the Elders were dead, (*Judg.* II. 7, 10.) they diſbelieved the Threatnings of their Law, and would make a Trial whether they were true or no; provoking the great Lord of all the World, by ſlighting his Commandments, which he had ſo ſtrictly enjoined them to obſerve.

Ver. 57. *But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their Fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful Bow.*] They imitated their Forefathers, both in their frequent Apoſtaſies from GOD, and in their Falſeneſs to their Promiſes, when they pretended to repent of them, (*Judg.* II. 13, 18, 19. III. 7, *&c.*) having deprived Minds and Hearts, which (like an ill-made Bow, that never ſends the Arrow to the Mark) would turn aſide into crooked Ways, and not be directed according to the Will of GOD.

Ver. 58. *For they provoked him to Anger with their high Places: and moved him to Jealouſie with their graven Images.*] For they highly incenſed him, by their Altars and Images, (*Judg.* Ch VI. v. 25.) which they built after the Manner of the Heathen, (*Numb.* XXII. 41.) in the high Places: where they worſhipped a Number of falſe Gods, (*Judg.* X. 6.) to his great Offence and Diſhonour.

Ver. 59. *When* GOD *heard* this *he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Iſrael:*] Which was ſo notorious, that the Judge of the World could not but take notice of it, and ſeverely puniſh it; by abandoning that People, for whom he had done ſuch Wonders, into the Hands of the *Syrians*, the *Moabites*, the *Midianites*, *Philiſtines*, and the Children of *Ammon* (*ſee the Book of Judges*,) who made them as contemptible unto others, as they were loathſome unto him.

Ver. 60. *So that he forſook the Tabernacle of Shiloh, the Tent* which *he placed among Men:*] Inſomuch that at laſt he quite forſook the City of *Shiloh*, where, in his Tabernacle, he had been graciouſly pleaſed to be preſent with them, (1 *Sam.* IV. 3, 4.) and would never return unto it any more, (*Jer.* VII. 12. and ſee *Arg.* of *Pſ.* LXVIII.)

Ver. 61. *And delivered his Strength into Captivity, and his Glory into the Enemies Hand.*] Nay, he let the Ark of the Covenant, the ſpecial Token of his Preſence with them, from whence his Power was wont to appear moſt gloriouſly for them, not only fall into their Hands; but be carried away captive by the *Philiſtines*, (1 *Sam.* IV. 11, 22. V. 1.)

Ver. 62. *He gave his People over alſo to the Sword; and was wroth with his Inheritance.*] Whoſe Sword ſlew a great Number of his People; (1 *Sam.* IV. 10.) ſo exceeding angry was he with thoſe, whom he had formerly taken into his ſpecial Care above all other Nations, *Deut.* XXXII. 8, 9.

Ver. 63. *The Fire conſumed their young Men: and their Maidens were not given to Marriage.*] For it was by his Divine Vengeance, more than the *Philiſtines* Valour, that they loſt Abundance of brave young Men; the very Flower of their Army: by which Means many of their Virgins were conſtrained to remain unmarried; and they that found Husbands, were fain to omit all Tokens of Joy, in a Time of publick Sorrow.

Ver. 64. *Their Prieſts fell by the Sword; and their Widows made no Lamentation.*] For ſome of their Prieſts, who were peculiarly conſecrated to GOD's Service, were ſlain in this Battle, (1 *Sam.* IV. 11.) and their Wives oppreſſed with Grief, did not long ſurvive, to make any publick Funeral for them; (1 *Sam.* IV. 20.)

Ver. 65. *Then the* LORD *awaked as one out of Sleep, and like a mighty Man, that ſhouteth by reaſon of Wine.*] The LORD himſelf alſo (who was wont to fight for us) ſeemed no more concerned in all theſe Calamities, which befel both us and our Religion, than a mighty Commander is at that, which is done to his Army when he is aſleep, or) overcome with Wine: Till at laſt, like ſuch a great Warriour, (who being awaked calls for his Arms, and charges the Enemy with greater Fury) he vindicated his Honour in a terrible Manner, and made a very great Deſtruction among them, 1 *Sam.* V. 9, 11.

Ver. 66. *And he ſmote his Enemies in the hinder Parts: he put them to a perpetual Reproach.*] For beſides the Fall of *Dagon* before the Ark, he ſmote ſeveral Cities of the *Philiſtines*, with a grievous Sort of Hæmorrhoids; whereof many died, and the reſt languiſhed under moſt miſerable Torments: (1 *Sam.* V. 6, 9, 12.) the Monuments of which they themſelves were forced to make, and ſend back with the Ark; to his great Glory, and their eternal Reproach, 1 *Sam.* VI. 3, 4, 9.

Ver. 67. *Moreover, he refuſed the Tabernacle of Joſeph: and choſe not the Tribe of Ephraim.*] Yet he would not return to *Shiloh* again (which was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, the Son of *Joſeph*) nor have the Ark of his Preſence placed there any more:

Ver. 68. *But choſe the Tribe of Judah, the Mount Sion which he loved.*] But firſt it was brought to *Kiriathaim*, (1 *Sam.* VI. 21.) a City of the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* XV. 6. where he reſolved hereafter to have his ſpecial Reſidence: and ſo from thence, (after a ſhort Stay at the Houſe of *Obed-Edom*) unto Mount *Sion* (1 *Chron.* XIII. 6. XVI. 1, 3, 29.) which he preferred before the Hill of *Kiriathaim* (1 *Sam.* VII. 1.) or any other Place in all the Country.

Ver. 69. *And he built his Sanctuary like high* Palaces, *like the Earth which he hath eſtabliſhed for ever.*] There *Solomon* built him a ſtately Temple, which, as it was a high and loſty Fabrick, ſo was not moveable like his former Habitation; but remained perpetually fixed, like the Earth on which it ſtood.

Ver. 70. *He choſe David alſo his Servant, and took him from the Sheep-folds.*] For as he had rejected *Shiloh*, and choſen *Sion* for the Place of his Dwelling; ſo he had likewiſe rejected *Saul*, and choſen *David* (the Father of *Solomon*) to be the King of his People: A Man who ſerved him as faithfully in that Office, as he had done his Father in keeping of his Sheep.

Ver. 71. *From following the Ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his People, and*

Iſrael

Iſrael his Inheritance.] From that mean Employment he took him, and raiſed him to the higheſt Charge and Dignity; that the Care he had employed in looking after the Ewes, and their Lambs when they ſhould fall, he might exerciſe in governing his People; and endeavouring that they, whom he had choſen for his own peculiar Inheritance, did no Way miſcarry.

Ver. 72. *So he fed them according to the Integrity of his Heart: and guided them by the Skilfulneſs of his Hands.*] And he did not deceive his Expectation; but govern'd them with equal Integrity and Prudence: never deſigning any Thing but their Good; and dextrouſly accompliſhing whatſoever he deſigned.

PSALM LXXIX.

A Pſalm of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm was penned, in all Probability, upon the ſame Occaſion with the LXXIV. viz. *The Deſtruction of* Jeruſalem *by* Nebuchadnezzar: *ſee what I have ſaid there, in the Argument of that Pſalm; and it will appear altogether unlikely, that this ſhould have Reſpect to the Times of* Antiochus Epiphanes: *as many imagine, and among the reſt,* Theodoret: *which is the more ſtrange, becauſe the ſame Reaſon he gives there why the LXXIV.* Pſalm *doth not belong to thoſe Times, (which he repeats again upon* Pſal. *LXXX.* 17.) *lies as ſtrongly againſt the Application of this Pſalm to the Fury and Rage wherewith that Prince fell upon the* Jewiſh *Nation. Whoſe miſerable Calamity under* Nebuchadnezzar *we find bewailed by* Jeremiah, *who then lived* (Jer. X. 25.) *in the very Words of the ſixth and ſeventh Verſes of this Pſalm: which is ſome Indication that they both belong to the ſame Matter: but whether* Jeremiah *took them from* Aſaph, *or* Aſaph *from him, I cannot certainly determine. The latter is moſt likely; becauſe this Pſalm ſeems to have been written, after that Deſolation had for ſome Time continued.*

We read indeed in the firſt Book of Maccabees *(VII.* 16, 17.) *two other Verſes of this Pſalm,* (viz. 2, 3.) *applied to the Slaughter of threeſcore of the devouter Sort of* Jews, *preſently after* Antiochus *his Death. But that Author quotes them, it is plain, as Words which had been written in former Days; and by him only made uſe of to his Purpoſe: which was to ſhew, that the ſame Cruelties were in great Part acted over again, which their Fathers had ſeen at the Deſtruction of* Jeruſalem.

Ver. 1. O GOD, *the Heathen are come into thine Inheritance, thy holy Temple have they defiled: they have laid Jeruſalem on Heaps.*] O GOD, the ſupreme Judge of the World, thou art not ignorant, we know, of our Calamity, for it comes by thy Order; but give us leave to repreſent unto thy Majeſty, the ſad Condition of the People and Place which was once very dear unto thee; for prophane Nations have not only invaded our (or rather thy) Country, to which thou haſt a peculiar Title; but polluted thy own Houſe, which was ſeparated to thy Service alone; and laid it, together with *Jeruſalem*, in ruinous Heaps.

Ver. 2. *The dead Bodies of thy Servants have they given* to be *Meat unto the Fowls of the Heaven, the Fleſh of thy Saints unto the Beaſts of the Earth.*] Under which thy Servants the Prieſts, and other holy Men, whom they have ſlain, could not have the Honour to be buried; nor obtain the common Civility of a Grave: but the dead Bodies of thoſe whom thou loveſt, they have barbarouſly expoſed to be devoured by ravenous Beaſts and Birds.

Ver. 3. *Their Bloud have they ſhed like Water round about Jeruſalem: and* there was *none to bury* them.] For they valued the ſhedding of their Bloud, no more than the pouring out of Water: which flowed in ſuch Abundance about *Jeruſalem*; that they left not Men enow alive, to take care of the Interment of the dead.

Ver. 4. *We are become a Reproach to our Neighbours: a Scorn and Deriſion to them that are round about us.*] And we that remain, lead a moſt deſpicable Life, being not only ſcorned, and abuſed, but openly derided, and made the Sport of the *Edomites* and other Nations, which formerly ſtood in Awe of us.

Ver. 5. *How long,* LORD, *wilt thou be angry for ever? ſhall thy Jealouſie burn like Fire?*] And which is ſaddeſt of all, we have long complained of this, and find no Relief; but only in our moſt paſſionate Cries to thee, O LORD: the Effects of whoſe juſt Anger and Jealouſie we groan under (becauſe we have forſaken thee, and been unfaithful to our Covenant with thee) but hope it will not always laſt; nor proceed to make an utter End of us.

Ver. 6. *Pour out thy Wrath upon the Heathen that have not known thee, and upon the Kingdoms that have not called upon thy Name.*] Pour it out rather (in as full a Meaſure, and with as little Pity, as they did our Bloud, Ver. 3.) upon the *Babylonians*: who, though they have conquered many Kingdoms, do not acknowledge thee at all, nor aſcribe their Succeſſes to thy Power: but to their Idols whom they ſerve, and honour with that Worſhip which is due to thee alone.

Ver. 7. *For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waſte his Dwelling-place.*] They have been the Inſtruments indeed of thy Vengeance: but have executed it with ſuch Cruelty, that, not content with the Conqueſt of us, they have ſought our total Extirpation: having depopulated our Country, and made that pleaſant Land a Wilderneſs; which thou gaveſt to *Jacob* and his Seed for their Habitation.

Ver. 8. *O remember not againſt us former Iniquities: let thy tender Mercies ſpeedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.*] O let not his Vertue, and the Covenant thou madeſt with him be forgotten; when thou reckoneſt with us for the Sins of our Fore-fathers; the Puniſhment of which, we beſeech thee that we may bear no longer: ſpeed our Deliverance,

good LORD: and how unworthy ſoever we be, let thy tender Compaſſion prevail with thee, to ſave us from utter Ruin, which is very near; ſo few, ſo broken and ſpent we are, unleſs ſeaſonably prevented by thy Mercy.

Ver. 9. *Help us, O* GOD *of our Salvation, for the Glory of thy Name: and deliver us, and purge away our Sins, for thy Names Sake.*] Send us that ſeaſonable Help, O GOD, from whom alone we expect it, and have heretofore very often received it; for it will tend much to the Honour of thy Almighty Goodneſs, (which in former Times was much celebrated, but of late hath been exceedingly diſparaged) to ſave us now, when none is able to preſerve us: upon that Account be pleaſed to paſs by our Sins, and to interpoſe for our Deliverance; leſt thou ſuffer together with us.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore ſhould the Heathen ſay, Where is their* GOD? *let him be known among the Heathen in our Sight, by the revenging of the Bloud of thy Servants which is ſhed.*] While the idolatrous Nations utter this inſolent Language, (which is exceeding grievous, nay, inſupportable to us) if their GOD be ſo great in himſelf, and ſo kind to them, as they pretend; why doth he not take their Part, and appear for their Deliverance? O that thou wouldeſt put them to Silence, by taking ſuch an open and remarkable Vengeance on theſe blaſphemous Nations for the Bloud they have ſhed; that not only we, but all the World, may ſee, thou haſt a Care of us thy Servants.

Ver. 11. *Let the ſighing of the Priſoner come before thee, according to the Greatneſs of thy Power; preſerve thou thoſe that are appointed to die.*] Let the Sighs and Groans of thoſe who lie in Priſon, be as prevalent with thee, as theſe Prayers: and magnifie thy Power by preſerving the Lives of thoſe whom they have condemned to die.

Ver. 12. *And render unto our Neighbours ſeven Fold into their Boſom, their Reproach wherewith they have reproached thee, O* LORD.] And when thou haſt done with the *Babylonians*, reckon with our Neighbours alſo, who have inſulted over us, and derided us, or rather, have ſpoken ſo reproachfully of thee, O GOD, that they juſtly deſerve, not only to be paid home in their Kind; but to be made ſeven Times more contemptible than we have been.

Ver. 13. *So we thy People, and Sheep of thy Paſture, will give thee Thanks for ever: we will ſhew forth thy Praiſe to all Generations.*] So we thy People, being conducted again to our Land, and happily reſtored to live under thy Government there, will never ceaſe to give Thanks unto thee, for thy Benefits beſtowed upon us: And be careful to tranſmit the Memory of them to thoſe, who ſhall come after us; that all future Generations may perpetuate thy Praiſes.

PSALM LXXX.

To the Chief Muſician, upon *Shoſhan-nim Eduth.*

A Pſalm of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm is ſomething of kin to the former; deprecating the Diſpleaſure of the Almighty in a Time of great Calamity. Which, as all that I have met withal think, was either in the Captivity of Judah *and* Benjamin *by* Nebuchadnezzar; *or of the Ten Tribes by* Salmanaſſar. *But it ſeems to me rather to have been penned between theſe two, in the Time of* Hezekiah: *who had wrote a Letter you find* (2 Chron. *XXXI.* 6.) *to the Remnant that were eſcaped out of the Hand of the King of* Aſſyria; *eſpecially to* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh, *the Tribes neareſt to them, that they would come to the Houſe of the Lord at* Jeruſalem, *and keep the Paſſover with them: which ſummons, ſeveral of them obeyed, Ver.* 11, 18. *and kept the Feaſt as long again as they were wont, Ver.* 23. *And when this was finiſhed, they all went through the Country, and threw down all the High Places and Altars that they found: not only in* Judah, *but in* Benjamin *alſo,* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh, 2 Chron. *XXXI.* 1.

But after this happy Settlement you read there, XXXII. 1. *that the Land was invaded by* Sennacherib, *and ſorely diſtreſſed; to the great Diſcouragement no doubt of thoſe, who had joined in the Reformation: which moved* Aſaph *(mentioned* 2 Chron. *XXIX.* 30. *ſee the Argument of* Pſal. *LXXXIII.) moſt earneſtly to beſeech* GOD, *(Ver.* 2. *of this Pſalm) that he would be pleaſed to ſtir up himſelf before* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh, *as well as* Benjamin, *(who was ſo link'd to* Judah, *that Part of* Jeruſalem *and of the Temple ſtood in that Tribe) and let them ſee, by a remarkable Deliverance, that their Zeal for the Purity of their Religion was acceptable to him.*

Another Reaſon indeed there may be given (which I have not omitted in my Paraphraſe) why theſe three *are joined together, rather than any other, becauſe they were the Tribes (as we read in the* ſecond *of* Numbers) *who, when they were in the Wilderneſs, always marched behind the Tabernacle when it moved; and had that Part where the Propitiatory was, from whence* GOD *ſent his Oracles, and the Tokens of his Power; juſt before them. But then there is this to be added, to make it probable that this Pſalm was not penned in the Time of the Captivity; becauſe as then there was no Ark; nor did* GOD *ſit between the Cherubims (concerning which Phraſe the learned Reader may ſee* Lud. de Dieu *upon* 1 Sam. *IV.* 4.) *as he is ſaid here to do; nor were* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh *then mixed with them, that we read of: ſo, firſt of all, it is too full of Elegancies for that Time of utter Deſolation; and ſecondly, the Greek expreſly calls it,* A Pſalm concerning the Aſſyrian *(who is the* wild Boar, *I ſuppoſe, that broke into* GOD's *Vineyard, mentioned Ver.* 13.) *and* laſtly, Hezekiah, *I obſerve, applies himſelf to* GOD *(in the Time of*

of that Distress by the King of Assyria) in the very Language of the Psalmist; and begins his Prayer just as Asaph *doth here, to him* that sits between the Cherubims, *desiring him to incline his Ear to his Requests,* 2 Kings XIX. 15, 16. Isa. XXXVII. 16, 17.

It was delivered to the Chief Master of Musick to be sung as the LX. Psalm, *upon the Instruments of six Strings: which were wont to be used in solemn Thanksgivings,* (see the Argument of that Psalm) *for he nothing doubted* God *would hear their Prayers, and destroy* Sennacherib: *Or perhaps it was ordered afterward to be sung in that manner.*

Ver. 1. GIVE *Ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a Flock, thou that dwellest* between *the Cherubims, shine forth.*] O thou, who art the Ruler and Protector of thy People *Israel*, who didst long ago give a famous Instance of thy Power; in preserving *Joseph*, when he fell like an innocent Lamb, among a Company of Wolves, (*Gen.* XXXVII. 18, *&c.*) and conducting him to the highest Preferment; reject not our humble Petitions, which we put up unto thee, in the like Distress: but shew that thou favourest us, by some illustrious Token of thy Presence among us, in thy holy Place; from whence thou canst send Angels to defend and deliver us, 2 *Kings* XIX. 35.

Ver. 2. *Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy Strength, and come* and *save us.*] Let the Posterity of *Joseph*, who beheld heretofore so many Enemies fall before thee, when they attended upon the Ark of thy Presence in the Wilderness, (*Numb.* II. 18, 20, 22.) and have lately been very zealous in thy Service, (2 *Chron.* XXX. 1. XXXI. 1.) see thy Power to be as great as ever: (though for some Time it hath not appeared at all for us) and that thou art as forward, in due Time, to grant us a glorious Deliverance.

Ver. 3. *Turn us again, O* God: *and cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.*] Restore us, O God, to our former Happiness; and for that End restore us into thy Favour: and then there will soon be an End of our Calamities.

Ver. 4. *O* Lord God *of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the Prayer of thy People?*] For what can the greatest Armies (2 *Kings* XVIII. 17.) do against thee, who art the supreme Lord of all, the absolute Commander of the Hosts of Heaven? Whose Help we have most importunately implored, and long waited for, as Men impatient to see our Enemies so prevalent; tho' hitherto thou hast been so exceeding angry with us, that thou hast not heard the Prayers of thy People.

Ver. 5. *Thou feedest them with the Bread of Tears: and givest them Tears to drink in great Measure.*] But hast turned our joyful Feasts unto Fasting and Weeping; and our Plenty into Scarcity of all Things, but only of Tears: which we pour out in large Measure; when we think of the Danger we are in, to perish by Famine and by Thirst, 2 *Chron.* XXXII. 21.

Ver. 6. *Thou makest us a Strife unto our Neighbours: and our Enemies laugh among themselves.*] Our Neighbours, the *Edomites* and others, either pick Quarrels with us; or strive among themselves who shall make the greatest Booty of us: while our Enemies, that besiege us, mock at our Inability to help our selves; and at our Confidence which we place in thee, 2 *Kings* XVIII. 22, 23. 2 *Chron.* XXXII. 15.

Ver. 7. *Turn us again, O* God *of Hosts, and cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.*] Convince them, O Lord, that it is not vainly placed, by restoring us again to our former Happiness: which it is easie for thee to do, who hast all the Hosts of Heaven at thy Command; if thou wilt but be pleased to favour us, (as we again beseech thee, thou wilt) and then no Harm shall befal us.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast brought a Vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the Heathen, and planted it.*] We were once very dear unto thee, when thou didst transplant us; like a choice Vine, out of *Egypt* into this Country: from whence thou didst drive out the ancient Inhabitants, that we might be settled in their Place.

Ver. 9. *Thou preparedst* Room *before it, and didst cause it to take deep Root, and it filled the Land.*] Thou preparedst the Way for us, making our Terror fall upon them before we came, (*Josh.* II. 9, 10, 11.) so that we easily expelled them; and being there firmly established, like a Vine deeply rooted in a fruitful Soil, we increased and multiplied, till we peopled all the Land.

Ver. 10. *The Hills were covered with the Shadow of it, and the Boughs thereof were like the goodly Cedars.*] And as a rich Vine covers the Hill, on the Side of which it is planted, or over-tops the lofty Cedars, which support it: so we obscured the Splendor of the greatest Kingdoms, and made mighty Kings become Tributaries to us, 1 *Kings* IV. 24.

Ver. 11. *She sent out her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Branches unto the River.*] For our Empire extended it self (just like such a luxuriant Vine, which spreads its Branches every Way) from the Mid-land Sea, to the River *Euphrates*, 1 *Kings* IV. 21. (*See* Psal. LXXII. 8.)

Ver. 12. *Why hast thou then broken down her Hedges, so that all they which pass by the Way, do pluck her?*] But now, alas! thou hast withdrawn thy Protection from us; and we are left like a Vineyard without its Hedges: All our strong Holds and fenced Cities are taken, (2 *Kings* XVIII. 3.) so that we lie open to be made a Prey to every one that hath a Mind to spoil us.

Ver. 13. *The Boar out of the Wood doth waste it, and the wild Beast of the Field doth devour it.*] The *Assyrian* King, like a wild Boar, that breaks into a Vineyard, treads down all under his Feet, and seeks to root us up: There is no savage Beast can make greater Havock among the Vines, than his barbarous Soldiers have done throughout all the Land; which they have eaten up, 2 *Kings* XIX. 29.

Ver. 14. *Return, we beseech thee, O* God *of Hosts: look down from Heaven, and behold, and visit this Vine;*] Our only Hope is, that thou, the great Lord of Hosts, on whom the Event of Wars, as of all Things else, depends, wilt

wilt be reconciled unto us, and drive him out again; deny us not this Request, we beseech thee; but though we be destitute of all Help on Earth, yet send us some from Heaven; and, tho' very unworthy, yet graciously take us into thy Care, and repair the Breaches which they have made.

Ver. 15. *And the Vineyard which thy right Hand hath planted, and the Branch* that *thou madest strong for thy self.*] Be favourable to the Remnant of us, which, by thy powerful Preservation, is still left; like the Root or Stock of a Vine, which may sprout out again: (2 *Kings* XIX. 30, 31.) and especially to our King; whom thou hast endued with Zeal and couragious Resolution for thy Service, (2 *Chron.* XXX. 32.) and for our Defence, XXXII. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 16. It is *burnt with Fire:* it is *cut down: they perish at the Rebuke of thy Countenance.*] Great Numbers of us are destroyed already, and may be compared to the numerous Branches of that remaining Stock, which, being cut off, are burnt with Fire: And all the rest of us must perish, if thou wilt not be reconciled unto us, but still persevere in thy Anger towards us.

Ver. 17. *Let thy Hand be upon the Man of thy right Hand, upon the Son of Man* whom *thou madest strong for thy self.*] Which we beseech thee turn away; and be the mighty Helper of our Sovereign, who is dearly beloved by thee; of that excellent Prince, whom thou hast endued with Zeal and couragious Resolution, for thy Service, and for our Defence and Preservation, (Ver. 15.)

Ver. 18. *So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy Name.*] Which shall be an everlasting Obligation upon us, never to revolt from thee to our former Idolatry: Do but free us from these deadly Enemies, and we will worship thee alone; and never cease to praise thee, and acknowledge that we owe our very Lives to thy Almighty Goodness.

Ver. 19. *Turn us again, O* Lord God *of Hosts: cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.*] Hear us, O great Lord, who hast all the Angels in Heaven at thy Command; hear us, we once more beseech thee, and restore us perfectly to our former Happiness: and, in order to it, restore us to thy Favour; and let there be a speedy End of all these Calamities.

PSALM LXXXI.

To the Chief Musician, upon *Gittith.*
A Psalm of *Asaph.*

ARGUMENT.

There was a special Command of God, *as the Psalmist here takes Notice,* Ver. 4. *for the making a joyful Sound with Trumpets, upon all the solemn Days, especially their New-Moons,* (Numb. X. 10.) *But more particularly upon the* first *Day of the* seventh *Month; which is called by this peculiar Name, above all other Days,* a Day of blowing the Trumpets, *i. e. from Morning unto Evening,* Numb. XXIX. 1. *and* a Memorial of blowing Trumpets, *Lev.* XXIII. 24. *For this solemn Day, I suppose this Psalm was composed; and the Reason is apparent why they were to blow with Trumpets longer on this Day than any other, because it was the first New-Moon in the Year, (for, according to their old Computation before they came out of* Egypt, *their Year began on this Day, as appears from* Exod. XXIII. 16. XXXIV. 22. *where the Feast of in-gathering their Fruits, is said to be in the* Revolution, *or* the End of the Year) *and* God *intended, it is possible, to awaken them (as* Maimonides *conjectures) to prepare themselves, by strict Inquiry into their Lives, and by hearty Repentance, for the great Day of Atonement, which was the* tenth *of this Month.*

But of what this blowing Trumpets or Cornets was a Memorial, *is not easy to resolve, the* Hebrews *themselves being at such a Loss about it, that they are fain to go as far back as the Deliverance of* Isaac, *and the offering a Ram in his stead for the Reason of it. The cleerest Account of which, it seems to me, may be fetcht from this Psalm; which plainly intimates, that the* blowing with Trumpets *at that Time, related to something which ensued upon their happy Deliverance out of* Egypt. *Which though it began upon the first Day of the first Month, according to their new Computation, (which took its Original from that Deliverance, in Memory of which* God *ordained the Feast of the Passover to begin on that Day,* Lev. XXIII. 6.) *yet they had not a complete Body of Laws delivered to them by* Moses, *till the* first *Day of the* seventh *Month, which was the Feast of blowing Trumpets.*

Moses *received indeed several Laws in the* third *Month,* Exod. XIX. 1, 3, &c. *on the* third *Day whereof (Ver.* 11, 16, 19, 20.) God *himself appeared on the Top of Mount* Sinai, *with the Sound of a Trumpet exceeding loud and prolonged, (to which I believe this Feast hath Respect) and spake the Ten Commandments; after which* Moses *delivered them a Body of Civil Laws,* Exod. XXI, XXII, XXIII. *But they did not know the Manner of the Divine Service, for which they came out of* Egypt *into the Wilderness, till* Moses *had been twice forty Days, one after the other, in the Mount; and likewise (as several of the* Jews *understand those Passages in* Deut. IX. *relating to this matter) had* forty *Days more bewailed their Sin, in making the Golden Calf. Which* sixscore *Days, if we add to the Time between their coming out of* Egypt, *and the giving of the Law on Mount* Sinai, *and to the* six *Days, which passed before* Moses *was called up into the Cloud, it will fall out exactly to be the* first Day of the seventh Month, *when he began to give Orders for the building of the Tabernacle, and making all Things belonging to* God's *House;*

House; according to the Direction he had received in the Mount. I am sure this was the precise Time of their setting up the Altar, and beginning to offer Burnt-Offerings, after their Return from the Captivity of Babylon; *before the Foundation of the Temple was laid. For you read* Ezra *III.* 1, 6. *it was upon the* first *Day of the* seventh Month; *in the middle of which they also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as* Moses *had appointed; in Memory of their dwelling in Booths in the Wilderness, under the Government of the Almighty, unto which the Psalmist here hath Respect in the next Words, which we translate* in the Time appointed, *that is, at the* Full Moon, *(as* de Dieu *hath demonstrated) on which the* Feast of Tabernacles *was kept in this* seventh Month: *at which Feast* Solomon *dedicated his Temple,* 1 Kings *VIII.* 2. *where it is called the* Feast: *and may well be meant here in the last* Words *of the third Verse of this Psalm our* Solemn Feast-Day. *Unless we take both the* New Moon Feast, *and the* Full Moon, *(*i. e. *Feast of Tabernacles) to be meant, and translate it* on the Day of our Feasts. *The same first Day also was kept* holy *by* Nehemiah, *with great Solemnity, VIII.* 1, 8, 9, 10. *where you find how the Book of the Law was distinctly read to the People on this Day, and the Sense of it explained: so that they came the next Day again for further Instruction,* Ver. 13. *Now that they might be more mindful of those Divine Benefits which in this Month they commemorated, more than in any other Month in the Year,* Asaph *(in the Days of* David, *it is likely) composed this Psalm, and directed it to the Master of Musick, to be sung (as the VIII. Psalm upon* Gittith*) in the Beginning of it, upon the Feast of Trumpets. And he introduces* God *himself (before whom they were summoned, as I said, by these Trumpets to appear) instructing them in the End of this Solemnity; and complaining of their Forgetfulness of his Benefits, in giving them so great a Deliverance out of the* Egyptian *Slavery; and of their Hard-heartedness, in preferring their own Inventions, and the Miseries they brought thereby upon themselves, before his Counsels, and the Happiness he intended for them. Which Happiness is expressed in the last Verse, by satisfying them with* Honey out of the Rock: *Concerning which the Learned may consult* Bochartus de Sacriis Animal. *Part* 2. *L.* 4. *C.* 12.

Ver. 1. *SING aloud unto* God *our Strength: make a joyful Noise unto the* God *of Jacob.*] Sing Praises aloud unto God; to whose mighty Power alone we owe the Deliverance which we now commemorate: shout with the Voice of Triumph, in Honour of him; who was so good unto your Fore-fathers.

Ver. 2. *Take a Psalm, and bring hither the Timbrel, the pleasant Harp with the Psaltery.*] Offer to him your chearful Hymns; and to compleat the Melody, and express the Greatness of your Joy, let some with Timbrels, others with the pleasant Harp, and others with the Psaltery, celebrate the Memory of his Mercies.

Ver. 3. *Blow up the Trumpet in the New Moon, in the Time appointed on our solemn Feast-Day.*] And let the Priests especially (*Numb.* X. 8.) take Care to blow with the Trumpets at this sacred Solemnity; on the first Day of the seventh Month, the principal New Moon in the Year, (which is attended with another Feast, at the Full Moon of this Month:) that all the People may call to mind the Trump of God, (*Exod.* XIX. 16, 19.) which our Fathers heard, at his dreadful Appearance on Mount *Sinai*, to give his Law unto them.

Ver. 4. *For this* was *a Statute for Israel, and a Law of the* God *of Jacob.*] For thus hath the Lord decreed in that Law; where the God of our Father *Jacob* requires this Service of us, *Lev.* XXIII. 24, *&c.*

Ver. 5. *This he ordained in Joseph* for *a Testimony, when he went out through the Land of Egypt:* where *I heard a Language that I understood not.*] This he appointed unto the Children of *Joseph*, as well as the rest of the Tribes of *Israel*; for a perpetual Memorial of his Benefits: when he, going out over all the Land of *Egypt*, (*Exod.* XI. 4. XII. 23, 29.) and destroying all their First-born, forced them to let us depart into the Wilderness; where we heard, to our great Astonishment, (for we were never before acquainted with it) the Voice of God.

Ver. 6. *I removed his Shoulder from the Burthen: his Hands were delivered from the Pots.*] Who considering with himself what a Title he had to our Service (having taken off the heavy Burthens which the *Egyptians* laid upon our Backs, and rid our Hands of those sordid and dirty Imployments, wherein they made us labour).

Ver. 7. *Thou calledst in Trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret Place of Thunder: I proved thee at the Waters of Meribah. Selah.*] Admonished us to this Effect, saying; You cried to me by reason of your cruel Servitude under *Pharaoh's* Task-masters, (*Exod.* II. 23.) and I delivered you out of it, (III. 8.) and again answered your Prayers, when you cried unto me in a new Distress, at the Red Sea, (*Exod.* XIV. 10, 13.) but confounded the *Egyptians*, with Thunder and Lightning out of the cloudy Pillar (*Exod.* XIV. 24, 25. *Psalm* LXXVII. 18.). After all which, I might well expect you should depend upon me: but presently found you full of Distrust and Infidelity at the Waters of Strife; (*Exod.* XVII. 7.) where I gave you a new Proof of my Power.

Ver. 8. *Hear, O my People, and I will testifie unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;*] Of which if you will still enjoy the Benefit, then give Ear, O my People, and I will solemnly declare my Will; and give a severe Charge unto you, O ye Israelites, if you resolve to be obedient to my Admonitions.

Ver. 9. *There shall no strange God be in thee: neither shalt thou worship any strange God.*] Then this is the principal Thing upon which all the rest depends, you shall not suffer any other Gods to be acknowledged among you,

but only me, (*Exod.* XX. 3, 23.) nor ſhall you worſhip the Gods of other Nations, *Exod.* XXIII. 13, 24, 32.

Ver. 10. *I am the* LORD *thy* GOD, *which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt: open thy Mouth wide, and I will fill it.*] For I, and I alone, am the living LORD, the eternal GOD; who gave a Being to all Things; and who am your peculiar Benefactor; having brought you out of the *Egyptian* Bondage: (*Exod.* XIX. 4. XX. 2.) And if you will be faithful and obedient to me, inlarge your Deſires as far as you pleaſe, and I will ſatisfie them; for all the World is mine, *Exod.* XIX. 5. XXIII. 25.

Ver. 11. *But my People would not hearken to my Voice: and Iſrael would none of me.*] But notwithſtanding their ſeeming Compliance with him, and the fair Promiſes they made him, (*Exod.* XIX. 8. XX. 19. XXIV. 3, 7.) he preſently complained, (*Exod.* XXXII. 7, 8, 9. as I hear him ſtill do at this Day) my People would not be obedient to me; and *Iſrael* would not reſt contented with me alone:

Ver. 12. *So I gave them up unto their own Hearts Luſt: and they walked in their own Counſels.*] So, provoked by their long Stubbornneſs, I took no further Care of them, but left them to do as they pleaſed; ſaying, let them follow their own Inventions.

Ver. 13. *O that my People had hearkened unto me, and Iſrael had walked in my Ways!*] But it had been better for them to have adhered to me; who, out of my tender Affection to their Good, ſtill wiſhed, even when they were ſo refractory, that my People *Iſrael* had been ſo wiſe, as to have followed my Directions, and been led by my Advice; and not their own fooliſh Imaginations.

Ver. 14. *I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their Enemies, and turned my Hand againſt their Adverſaries.*] Then I ſhould in a ſhort Time have quelled all their Enemies; and, by one Victory after another, have quite deſtroyed thoſe Adverſaries: which (ſince I brought them into *Canaan*) have often miſerably afflicted and oppreſſed them, *Judg.* II. 2, 3, 14, 15, 19, 20. III. 1, &c. IV. 2.

Ver. 15. *The Haters of the* LORD *ſhould have ſubmitted themſelves unto him: but their Time ſhould have endured for ever.*] All that maligned their Proſperity, and ſet themſelves againſt the Deſign of the LORD, to make them victorious over their Enemies, ſhould have been ſo daunted, that they ſhould have diſſembled their inward Hatred, and been forced, at leaſt, to a counterfeit Submiſſion: but his People ſhould have ſeen bleſſed Days, and injoyed a ſubſtantial and durable Happineſs without any Interruption.

Ver. 16. *He ſhould have fed them alſo with the fineſt of the Wheat: and with Honey out of the Rock ſhould I have ſatisfied thee.*] He ſhould have made their Country exceeding fruitful, and fed them with the richeſt Wheat: And I my ſelf, ſaith the LORD, would have bleſſed thee with ſuch Plenty, that in the Deſarts thou ſhouldeſt have found the ſweeteſt Refreſhments; and without any Care of thine, the Bees ſhould have laboured Honey for thee, in the Rocks, and Holes of Trees, and ſuch like Places, *Deut.* XXXII. 13. *Judg.* XIV. 8. 1 *Sam.* XIV. 25, 26.

PSALM LXXXII.

A Pſalm of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

Though there had been a notable Reformation made by Jehoſaphat, (2 *Chron.* XIX. 5, 6, &c.) *of thoſe Corruptions, which had been growing in the ſupreme Court of Judicature at* Jeruſalem, *as well as in the leſſer in other Cities, ever ſince the Times of* David *and* Solomon, (*who took Care to ſee Juſtice done,* 1 Chron. XVIII. 14. 1 Kings III. 9, 28.) *yet it appears, by the frequent Complaints of* Iſaiah, *that when* Hezekiah (*in whoſe Days that Prophet lived*) *came to the Crown, there was a general Depravation again; and that notwithſtanding the Amendment he had made in Matters of the Divine Worſhip,* (2 Chron. XXX, XXXI.) *and his Reſolutions and Endeavours, no queſtion, to reform the Abuſes which were in their civil Judicatures,* (*as I have expounded* Pſal. LXXV. 2, 3.) *they continued ſtill exceeding corrupt. Inſomuch that* Iſaiah *calls their Judges,* Rulers of Sodom, *Iſa.* I. 10. (*when he finds no Fault with their religious Services,* Ver. 11, 12, &c.) *and ſays,* their Princes were rebellious, Companions of Thieves, loving Gifts, and following after Rewards, *Ver.* 23.

Where it is evident he deſcribes the Judges in the higheſt Court of all; who are called by the Name of Princes *in ſeveral Places, particularly in* Jeremiah: *who being condemned by the Prieſts, and Prophets, and People, as a Man worthy to die,* Jer. XXVI. 8, 9. *was brought before the* Princes, *Ver.* 10, 11. *at whoſe Bar he cleared himſelf ſo well, that they acquitted him,* Ver. 16.

And as there they are called Princes, *with reſpect to their Superiority over the People; ſo here in this Pſalm they are called* Elohim, *Gods, in reſpect to the Fountain of their Power, which was from the moſt High; who honoured them with his own Name; which is ſo frequent for thoſe of the ſupreme Court, that ſome, not unreaſonably, underſtand thoſe Words,* Judges IX. 13. *which we render,* Cheers the Heart of GOD and Man, *in this manner, Wine alike cheers both Princes and People, Judges and Clients, the meaner Perſons* (*called in this Pſalm* Adam, *Man, Ver.* 6, 7.) *as well as the greateſt, who in Oppoſition to them are called* Gods. *Whom* Aſaph (*who lived in the Time of* Hezekiah, 2 *Chron.* XXIX. 30. *ſee* Pſalm *LXXIII.*) *admoniſhes to be more careful in their Duty; and to remember that* GOD *obſerved them, and would judge them.*

Ver. 1. GOD *ſtandeth in the Congregation of the Mighty: he judgeth among the Gods.*] Remember, O ye Judges, whoſe Miniſters you are, (2 *Chron.* XIX. 6.) and conſider, that your are not ſo powerful, but GOD, who hath put you in his Place, and honoured you with his Name, (*Exod.* XXII. 28.) is far greater, and

and as he is preſent in your Court to obſerve what you do; ſo will call you to a ſtrict Account, and ſeverely puniſh you, if you judge amiſs.

Ver. 2. *How long will ye judge unjuſtly, and accept the Perſons of the wicked? Selah.*] How dare you then pronounce an unrighteous Sentence? Is it not Time to leave off your Partiality? and no longer to favour a bad Cauſe, becauſe the Man is rich and great; and can either give you a large Bribe, if you will judge it for him; or do you a Miſchief, if you give Sentence againſt him.

Ver. 3. *Defend the Poor and fatherleſs: do Juſtice to the afflicted and needy.*] Your Duty is, to do equal Juſtice to all Men that come before you; and to take a particular Care, that the Poor and the Fatherleſs do not ſuffer becauſe they have no Money to give, nor any Friend to ſollicit, for the Defence of a righteous Cauſe: and that the Men of low Condition, and ſuch as are reduced to very great Want, be not condemned; when they are injuriouſly proſecuted, by thoſe who are above them.

Ver. 4. *Deliver the Poor and Needy: rid* them *out of the Hand of the wicked.*] See that you protect and deliver him, that is quite exhauſted and miſerably oppreſſed with Poverty: let them not become a Prey to violent Men, who have no Conſcience; but put it out of their Power to undo them.

Ver. 5. *They know not, neither will they underſtand; they walk on in Darkneſs: all the Foundations of the Earth are out of Courſe.*] Theſe are the conſtant Admonitions, which the Men of GOD give the Judges; but alas! hitherto they have little prevailed. For they will not ſtudy the Laws of GOD; or if they do, will not think it their Intereſt to be governed by them: but are blinded by Bribes, or by their corrupt Affections, to do any Thing that they would have them; inſomuch that the Foundations of the Kingdom, which are Juſtice and Truth, are ſhaken; all Things are in Confuſion, and in Danger to come to utter Ruin, *Iſa.* V. 23, 24. X. 1, 2, 3.

Ver. 6. *I have ſaid, Ye* are *Gods: and all of you* are *Children of the moſt High.*] Hear therefore the Sentence of GOD upon you, (whoſe Words theſe are) I have put my Majeſty upon you; and, though you be no more than other Men in your ſelves, have by my Conſtitution raiſed you to ſuch a Dignity on Earth, as my celeſtial Miniſters have in Heaven.

Ver. 7. *But ye ſhall die like Men, and fall like one of the Princes.*] Yet this ſhall not privilege you in your unjuſt Proceedings; but ſince you have no Regard to me, nor to your Office, I will have as little Regard to you: for you ſhall periſh like one of the common Men, without any Reſpect to your Honour; and be thrown down from your Seats, like the Tyrants and cruel Oppreſſors that have been before you.

Ver. 8. *Ariſe, O* GOD, *judge the Earth: for thou ſhalt inherit all Nations.*] Let us ſee this Sentence fulfilled, O GOD, the righteous Judge; and do not ſuffer the inſolent Iniquity of theſe Men any longer: but redreſs all thoſe Evils wherewith ſuch Men have filled not only this Nation, but all the World: which belongs to thee, and thou wilt one Day ſure vindicate Mankind, as the juſt Owner of them, from the Tyranny of thoſe impious Governours; who now abuſe them, as if they had an abſolute Dominion over them.

PSALM LXXXIII.

A Song or Pſalm of *Aſaph.*

ARGUMENT.

It is the common Opinion, that the Combination of powerful Enemies, againſt which they here implore the Divine Aſſiſtance, was that mentioned in the 2 Chron. *XX. in the Days of* Jehoſhaphat. *The Reaſon is, becauſe the* Children of Lot, *(Ver.* 8.*)* viz. *the* Moabites *and* Ammonites *(the Ground of whoſe Quarrel with the* Jews *is ſet down in* Judg. *XI.) ſeem to have been the principal in this Confederacy, and the other but Aſſiſtants; as it is plain they were in that Invaſion,* 2 Chron. *XX.* 1. *And then the Author of this Pſalm, muſt be either* Jehaziel, *one of* Aſaph's *Poſterity, (upon whom you read there, Ver.* 14. *the Spirit of the* LORD *then came) or ſome other in thoſe Days, whoſe proper Name this was. Which is much more probable than their Conjecture, who think the Author was* Aſaph, *in the Days of* David; *who ſubdued indeed the* Moabites *and* Edomites, *and other neighbouring Nations: but we do not read of any Confederacy they made againſt him; much leſs that they ſent as far as* Aſſyria *for Help; or that they began the War, as the People here mentioned did.*

The ſame may be ſaid againſt the Application of it to the Conqueſts made in the Days of Uzziah *over ſeveral People here mentioned,* 2 Chron. *XXVI.* 6, 7, 8. *Or to the Invaſion made by* Sennacherib *King of* Aſſyria: *who did not join himſelf (as we read here, Ver.* 8.*) with other Nations; but by the Forces of his own Kingdom alone, as far as appears, came up againſt them.*

There are thoſe indeed that take in all the Attempts made upon them, ſince that in Jehoſhaphat's *Days, by ſeveral Nations, the laſt of which was* Aſſyria; *whoſe King came to do that which the reſt had not been able to effect. And then the Author is eaſily found to be the ſame that I have named in the Argument of the foregoing, and many other Pſalms. And which Way ſoever we are pleaſed to determine the Matter, it is plain, in general, that many Nations, both near and remote, who had a Hatred to the Jews, ſet themſelves together, when this Pſalm was penned, to deſtroy them: aſſaulting them not only ſeverally, but conjunctly; entring into Conſultation alſo, and conſpiring together how to effect it. Which Hatred continuing after their Return to their own Land, from the Captivity of* Babylon, *gave Occaſion to* They dotet *to ſay (both in the Preface to this*

Pſalm,

Pſalm, and upon the twelfth Verſe of it) that the Pſalmiſt here complains of the Oppoſition which ſeveral of their Neighbours made to the rebuilding of the Temple, and of Jeruſalem.

But this ſeems more improbable than all the reſt, many of thoſe Countries, here named, being before that Time deſtroyed: and the Aſſyrians *themſelves (as he himſelf obſerves upon Ver.* 8.*) being not then extant. Though whenſoever this Confederacy happened, there was very great Reaſon for that ſollicitous and vehement Importunity wherewith this Pſalm begins.*

Why it was called a Song-Pſalm, *ſee* Pſalm *LXVII.*

Ver. 1. K*eep not thou Silence, O* God: *hold not thy Peace, and be not ſtill, O* God.] O God, the ſupreme Judge of the World, whoſe Power is ſo great, that the united Forces of all Men on Earth, or Angels in Heaven, are not to be compared with it, (2 *Chron.* XX. 6, 12.) who with one Word of thy Mouth canſt diſſipate this great Army; do not refuſe now to anſwer our Prayers in this ſore Diſtreſs: O do not ſhut thy merciful Ears to our Cries; nor quietly ſee us periſh, moſt mighty God.

Ver. 2. *For lo, thine Enemies make a Tumult: and they that hate thee, have lift up the Head.*] For we are ſurpriſed with a ſudden Invaſion of numerous Enemies (Haters of Thee, and thy Worſhip, as much as of our Nation) who make a dreadful Noiſe, like the Waves of the Sea (2 *Chron.* XX. 2.) and proudly promiſing themſelves a Victory, inſult as if they had already won it.

Ver. 3. *They have taken crafty Counſel againſt thy People, and conſulted againſt thy hidden ones.*] They have, with equal Malice and Subtilty, carried on a cloſe Deſign againſt thy People: and with great Secreſie conſulted how to deſtroy, not only us, whom thou haſt hitherto wonderfully protected as thy Jewels; but thy Temple alſo; and the ſecret Place wherein thou there dwelleſt.

Ver. 4. *They have ſaid, Come, and let us cut them off from being a Nation: that the Name of Iſrael may be no more in Remembrance.*] Come, ſay they one to another, let us agree and join all the Power we have together; not merely to make a Conqueſt of them, but for their utter Extirpation, (2 *Chron.* XX. 11.) that there may be no Mention hereafter in the World, of ſuch a People as the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 5. *For they have conſulted together with one Conſent: they are confederate againſt thee.*] And accordingly, ten ſeveral Nations are combined heartily in this Deſign; and how different ſoever their Inclinations are upon other Accounts, they have all entred into a ſolemn League, and made a Covenant of mutual Help, and of imploying their joint Endeavours, totally to ſubvert that Government and Religion, which thou haſt eſtabliſhed.

Ver. 6. *The Tabernacles of Edom, and the Iſhmaelites: of Moab, and the Hagarens.*] Thoſe warlike Nations, the *Edomites* and *Iſhmaelites*; who dwell in Tents, are engaged in this Enterpriſe: and ſo are the *Moabites*, and others deſcended from *Hagar*, the Mother of *Iſhmael*.

Ver. 7. *Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philiſtines, with the Inhabitants of Tyre.*] With whom are united our Neighbours the *Gebalites* (Joſ. *XIII.* 5.) the *Ammonites*; our old Enemies the *Amalekites* and *Philiſtines*; and they that dwell in and about the famous City of *Tyre*.

Ver. 8. *Aſſur alſo is joined with them: they have holpen the Children of Lot. Selah.*] And to add to their Strength, they have called the powerful Nation of the *Aſſyrians* into their Aſſociation: on whoſe Aſſiſtance, the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* (the Authors of this War) do principally rely.

Ver. 9. *Do unto them as* unto *the Midianites: as* to *Siſera, as* to *Jabin, at the Brook of Kiſon.*] The greater Need we have of thy Aſſiſtance, and with the greater Earneſtneſs we beſeech thee to make them an Example of humane Weakneſs: by defeating them, as thou didſt that vaſt Army of the *Midianites* and their Confederates, (*Judg.* VI. 5. VII. 12.) whom *Gideon* overthrew with no greater Power than three hundred Men, (*Judg.* VII. 21, 22. compared with 2 *Chron.* XX. 23.) and as thou didſt in former Times to that famous Captain *Siſera*, (who fell by the Hand of a Woman, *Judg.* IV. 21.) and to *Jabin* his King: who, together with his Army, was ſwept away in the Brook of *Kiſhon*, *Judg.* IV. 21, 24. V. 21.

Ver. 10. Which *periſhed at Endor: they became as Dung for the Earth.*] A great Slaughter there was of them near *Endor* (compare *Judg.* V. 19. with *Joſh.* XVII. 11.) where their Carcaſes lay and rotted; and ſerved inſtead of Dung, to fatten and enrich the Earth.

Ver. 11. *Make their Nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their Princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna:*] Let their Princes and Commanders fall like *Oreb* and *Zeeb*: (*Judg.* VII. 25.) and their Kings not be able to ſave themſelves by Flight; but be taken and ſlain, like *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, Judg. *VIII.* 12, 21.

Ver. 12. *Who ſaid, Let us take to our ſelves the Houſes of* God *in Poſſeſſion.*] Who came with a Deſign, (*Judg.* VI. 3, 4, 5.) as theſe Nations do now, (2 *Chron.* XX. 10, 11.) to poſſeſs themſelves of that pleaſant Land, wherein thou dwelleſt among us in thy holy Habitation.

Ver. 13. *O my* God, *make them like a Wheel: as the Stubble before the Wind.*] O my God, whoſe Goodneſs hath never failed us in Diſtreſs; let them not be able to ſtand their Ground; but put them to Flight, and make them run as ſwiftly, as a Ball down a Hill; diſperſe all their Forces like the Chaff, when it is blown about with a furious Wind.

Ver. 14. *As the Fire burneth the Wood, and as the Flame ſetteth the Mountains on Fire;*] Blaſt and conſume them utterly; as the Lightning, or the ſcorching Rays of the Sun in a long Drought do the Leaves of the Foreſt-Trees, or the Graſs upon the Mountains, (*Joel* I. 19.)

Ver. 15. *So perſecute them with thy Tempeſt, and make them afraid with thy Storm.*] Raiſe a dreadful Tempeſt to affright them; and purſue them ſo with thy Vengeance, that they may be ſhattered and driven away inſtantly, as

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in a Whirlwind: put them into ſuch a pannick Fear, that they may not know which Way to turn, but claſh againſt one another in a terrible Confuſion, 2 *Chron.* XX. 22, *&c.*

Ver. 16. *Fill their Faces with Shame: that they may ſeek thy Name, O* LORD.] And make thoſe that eſcape ſo aſhamed at this diſgraceful Diſappointment; that they may not be able to hold up their Heads, nor deny thy Power to be ſuperior to theirs; but humbly ſeek thy Favour.

Ver. 17. *Let them be confounded and troubled for ever: yea, let them be put to Shame, and periſh:*] This is the worſt we wiſh them, notwithſtanding their Enmity to us; that they may be ſo aſtoniſhed and confounded at their Defeat, as never to recover any Courage to aſſault us: nay, together with their Credit and their Courage, quite loſe their Power to give us any further Trouble.

Ver. 18. *That* Men *may know that thou whoſe Name alone* is *JEHOVAH*, art *the moſt High over all the Earth.*] And thereby be convinced, which they would not believe before, that thou art what thou art called, the true and only GOD, who giveſt Being to all Things; and art the ſupreme Governour, not only of us, but of all the Nations upon Earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

To the Chief Muſician upon *Gittith.* A Pſalm for the Sons of *Korah.*

ARGUMENT.

It is uncertain to what Times this Pſalm belongs: They ſeem to have moſt Reaſon on their Side, who think it was compoſed upon the ſame Occaſion with the XLII. and XLIII. *when* David, *forced from* Jeruſalem *by the Rebellion of his Son* Abſalom, *moſt paſſionately long'd to be reſtor'd to the Place of* GOD's *Worſhip. But it may as well, or better, in my Judgment, be thought to have been compoſed by ſome pious* Levite *in the Country, when* Sennacherib's *Army had blockt up the Way to* Jeruſalem, *and hindred them from waiting upon the Service of* GOD *at the Temple: where he judged the loweſt Miniſtry, that of a Porter (as we read* Ver. 10.) *to be far more honourable, than the higheſt Preferment among Pagan Nations. And thus I ſhall take the Liberty to expound it in my* Paraphraſe: *pointing the Reader to ſuch Places in the Hiſtory of that ſad Time, as I think will explain ſome Paſſages of this Pſalm: which, after their Freedom was reſtored, by the Deſtruction of* Sennacherib's *Army, the Author of it delivered to the Maſter of Muſick in the Temple, to be ſung as the* VIII. Pſalm. *See there.*

Ver. 1. HOW *amiable* are *thy Tabernacles, O* LORD *of Hoſts!*] It is impoſſible to expreſs the Affection I have to thy Dwelling-Place, O LORD; who art attended there by the Miniſtry of the heavenly Hoſt, (*Iſa.* XXXVII. 16.) and needeſt none of our Services.

Ver. 2. *My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the* LORD: *my Heart and my Fleſh crieth out for the living* GOD.] But we cannot live with any Satisfaction, while we are abſent from thee; for I am ready to faint away in ardent Longings, to tread again in the Courts of the LORD's Houſe: where my Tongue, and my Hands, as well as my Mind, would gladly be imployed in the Praiſes of our GOD; who in this excels all other, (2 *Kings* XIX. 4, 16, 18.) that he lives for ever.

Ver. 3. *Yea, the Sparrow hath found an Houſe, and the Swallow a Neſt for her ſelf, where ſhe may lay her young,* even *thine Altars, O* LORD *of Hoſts, my King, and my* GOD.] It grieves me, O mighty LORD of all the heavenly Hoſts, whoſe Subject I am, and infinitely engaged to thee; to ſee the very Birds, who know nothing of thee, injoy that Liberty which is denied me: who am here lamenting my Diſtance from thee, when the Sparrows and the Ring-doves have their conſtant Reſidence at thy Houſe; and there live ſo undiſturbed, that they build their Neſts, and bring forth their Young, in the Rafters of it.

Ver. 4. *Bleſſed* are *they that dwell in thy Houſe: they will be ſtill praiſing thee. Selah.*] O how happy are they who partake of ſuch a Privilege! who live ſo near thy Houſe, and frequent it ſo much, as if it were their own! Their delightful Imployment is, with never-ceaſing Praiſes, to pay their thankful Acknowledgments unto thee.

Ver. 5. *Bleſſed* is *the Man whoſe Strength* is *in thee: in whoſe Heart* are *the Ways* of them.] And happy alſo is that Man (how mean ſoever his outward Condition be) who, relying upon thy Divine Protection, (*Exod.* XXXIV. 24.) goes up three Times a Year to the ſolemn Feaſt at *Jeruſalem:* or when he is debarred that Liberty, as I now am, is one of thoſe devout Perſons, whoſe Hearts are more in the High-ways that lead thither, than at their own Home.

Ver. 6. Who *paſſing thro' the Valley of Baca, make it a Well: the Rain alſo filleth the Pools.*] Who travelling through the troubleſome Valley of *Baca*, where there is no Water, paſs it as chearfully, as if it abounded with pleaſant Springs: and, depending on GOD, as the Fountain of what they want, receive from him the Bleſſing of plentiful and ſeaſonable Showers, to refreſh them in their Journey:

Ver. 7. *They go from Strength to Strength,* every one of them *in Zion appeareth before* GOD.] So that the whole Company go from Stage to Stage, with an unwearied Vigour; till they all preſent themſelves before GOD, to receive his Bleſſing in his Temple, upon the Hill of *Sion.*

Ver. 8. *O* LORD GOD *of Hoſts, hear my Prayer: give Ear, O* GOD *of Jacob. Selah.*] O mighty LORD, who commandeſt all the heavenly Hoſts, which attend in that holy Place, (and are far more numerous than the Armies that invade us, 2 *Chron.* XXXII. 7.) make me one of that happy Number; and reſtore me, O GOD, who deliveredſt *Jacob* out of all his Troubles, to the Liberty of waiting upon thee there.

Ver. 9. *Behold, O* GOD *our Shield, and look*

upon the Face of thine Anointed.] Look graciouſly upon me, O GOD, who haſt hitherto been our Protector againſt the moſt powerful Enemies: and accept the Prayer of our Sovereign, who petitions thee ſtill to be our Defender, 2 *Kings* XIX. 19.

Ver. 10. *For a Day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand: I had rather be a Door-keeper in the Houſe of my* GOD, *than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedneſs.* For one Day ſpent in thy Courts, is far more pleaſant than a thouſand in any other Place; and I had rather lie at the Gates of thy Houſe, than live in the moſt ſplendid Condition in idolatrous Countries.

Ver. 11. *For the* LORD GOD *is a Son and Shield: the* LORD *will give Grace and Glory: no good* Thing *will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.*] For tho' our Happineſs be ſometimes clouded, yet the LORD, like the Sun, will diſpel the Darkneſs of Affliction; and, having brought us out of a diſconſolate Condition, defend and ſecure us in a better: (2 *Kings* XX. 6.) The LORD will give thoſe Favour with others, and advance them to great Honour, (2 *Chron.* XXXII. 22, 23.) he will never be ſparing of his Bleſſings, but heap them abundantly on thoſe, who ſincerely do his Will in all Things, 2 *Kings* XVIII. 5, 6. XX. 3.

Ver. 12. *O* LORD *of Hoſts, bleſſed is the Man that truſteth in thee.*] O moſt mighty LORD, who commandeſt all the Hoſt of Heaven, happy is that Man, who by his Integrity preſerves this Hope and Confidence in thee; though, for the preſent, he be reſtrained from the delightful Enjoyment of thee, in thy Temple.

PSALM LXXXV.

To the Chief Muſician. A Pſalm for the Sons of *Korah.*

ARGUMENT.

It is thought by many, that this Pſalm was compoſed by ſome of the Sons of Korah, *after* David's *Baniſhment from* Jeruſalem *by his Son* Abſalom, (*called a Captivity, as we read* Pſal. *XIV.* ult.) *and his happy Reſtauration to his Kingdom; though not to ſuch a Settlement as they deſired. But it may be as well, or better, applied to the miraculous Providence, which drove* Sennacherib *out of the Land,* (*who had taken many Captives,* Iſa. *V.* 13.) *and reſtored them to the happy Liberty, whoſe Loſs they bewailed in the Pſalm foregoing.*

Which Way ſoever we underſtand it, the Compoſure is ſuch, that it might be much better uſed by them after their Return from the Captivity of Babylon, *than at any other Time: when they were infeſted with many Enemies, who diſturbed their peaceable Enjoyment of their Country and Religion. And therefore it is poſſible it might be reviewed, if not made, in thoſe Days; and delivered to the Chief Maſter of Muſick in the Temple: to be ſung preſently after the Foundation of it was laid;* (Ezra *III.* 10, 11, *&c.*) *but the Work hindred from proceeding by the Oppoſition of their Enemies. And ſo I ſhall interpret it.*

Ver. 1. LORD, *thou haſt been favourable unto thy Land: thou haſt brought back the Captivity of Jacob.*] Thou haſt been exceeding kind unto us, O LORD; and we moſt thankfully acknowledge the Favour thou haſt done us: in delivering us, the Poſterity of *Jacob*, out of our ſad Captivity; and reſtoring us to the Land, in which thou thy ſelf haſt choſen to dwell, *Ezra* I.

Ver. 2. *Thou haſt forgiven the Iniquity of thy People, thou haſt covered all their Sin. Selah.*] Our Sins kept us from it, in Baniſhment, a long Time; but now thou haſt graciouſly pardoned, both our Idolatry, and all the other Crimes, for which we juſtly ſuffered.

Ver. 3. *Thou haſt taken away all thy Wrath: thou haſt turned* thy ſelf *from the Fierceneſs of thine Anger.*] Thou haſt put an End to the ſore Puniſhments, which in thy heavy Diſpleaſure thou inflicteddſt on us: and turned thy Severity, which, like Fire, had almoſt conſumed us, into great Clemency and Mercy towards us.

Ver. 4. *Turn us, O* GOD *of our Salvation, and cauſe thine Anger towards us to ceaſe.*] Compleat, good LORD, our Deliverance, which thou haſt thus graciouſly begun: and let not our Ingratitude provoke thee, to continue this new Vexation and Trouble that is befaln us, *Ezra* IV. 4, 5, 21, 23.

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine Anger to all Generations?*] Which forced us to ſigh, and ſay in the Anguiſh of our Souls, will there never be an End of our Miſeries? Is it not enough that the foregoing Generation hath felt the ſad Effects of thine Anger; but it muſt extend it ſelf to us alſo, and our Poſterity?

Ver. 6. *Wilt thou not revive us again; that thy People may rejoice in thee?*] Will it not be more for thy Honour, not only to preſerve this feeble Life which thou haſt beſtowed on us, but to give us a perfect Recovery? that thy People may have nothing to damp their Joy, and intire Satisfaction, in thy Goodneſs to them.

Ver. 7. *Shew us thy Mercy, O* LORD, *and grant us thy Salvation.*] Make us ſo happy, good LORD; and, tho' we deſerve indeed to be more miſerable than we are, yet let thy Mercy prevail with thee, to grant us a compleat Deliverance.

Ver. 8. *I will hear what* GOD *the* LORD *will ſpeak: for he will ſpeak Peace unto his People, and to his Saints: but let them not turn again to Folly.*] I will wait patiently upon the LORD, the Judge of the World, for a gracious Anſwer to theſe Prayers; hoping that he will not condemn us to further Puniſhment: but ſettle his People, who devoutly worſhip him, in a proſperous Tranquillity; provided they return not again to their old Idolatry.

Ver. 9. *Surely his Salvation is nigh them that fear him; that Glory may dwell in our Land.*]

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He will be so far from deserting those who fear to offend him; that I am confident the Time approaches, when he will finish what he hath begun to do for us: in rebuilding our Temple, (*Ezra* V. 2, 8. VI. 7, 8, &c.) and restoring our Country to its ancient Dignity and Splendour.

Ver. 10. *Mercy and Truth are met together: Righteousness and Peace have kissed* each other.] For, methinks, I see Goodness and Fidelity, Justice and Concord (which are the principal Glory of a Kingdom) meeting together, like ancient Friends, which have been long absent, and embracing each other.

Ver. 11. *Truth shall spring out of the Earth: and Righteousness shall look down from Heaven.*] And as Truth and Honesty, with all other Vertues, shall grow and flourish among us (like Flowers and Herbs in the Spring, after a tedious Winter) so GOD shall faithfully fulfil his Promises to us, and exercise a most gracious Providence over us.

Ver. 12. *Yea, the* LORD *shall give* that which is *good: and our Land shall yield her Increase.*] Yea, the LORD will do us good beyond our Expectation: and reward our Fruitfulness in good Works, with such a large and plentiful Increase of the Fruits of the Earth; as shall demonstrate the Bounty of Heaven to us.

Ver. 13. *Righteousness shall go before him: and shall set* us *in the Way of his Steps.*] He will govern us with great Justice and Mercy; having his faithful Promises always before his Eyes; from that Rule he will never swerve; but stedfastly proceed by it, as the constant Method he will hold in his Divine Administrations.

PSALM LXXXVI.

A Prayer of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Title satisfies us that David *was the Author of this Psalm; which the Collector of this* third *Book found, I suppose, after the other* two *were made up and published: and so placed it here, among those which belong to the same Subject. For though it was composed by* David, *when he was so persecuted, either by* Saul *or* Absalom, *that he was stript of all he had, and left in a most forlorn Condition,* (Ver. 1.) *yet* Theodoret *thinks it was made with a Prospect of the Attempt, which the* Assyrians *made upon* Jerusalem; *and the Hope which* Hezekiah *then placed in* GOD, *for Deliverance. Which Notion it is likely he had from the* Jews; *who say, that this* Prayer *was made Use of by* Hezekiah, *in the Time of that sore Distress: for the first Words of this Psalm, are the same with his in* 2 Kings *XIX.* 16. *and the eighth and ninth Verses may very fitly be accommodated to that History (as I have there observed) but the rest a great deal better to* David.

Ver. 1. BOW *down thine Ear,* O LORD, *hear me: for I* am *poor and needy.*] There cannot be a fitter Object of thy Mercy, O LORD, than thy poor Supplicant, who beseeches thee graciously to condescend to his Request; for else he is utterly undone, being quite destitute of all human Help.

Ver. 2. *Preserve my Soul, for I* am *holy: O thou my* GOD, *save thy Servant, that trusteth in thee.*] And yet my Life is in imminent Danger, unless thou dost preserve it; as many Reasons make me hope thou wilt: for, as thou the righteous Judge hast been long my Benefactor, and I am perfectly innocent of that my Enemies charge me withal; so I my self have been a Reliever of others in their Need; and besides, am a faithful Servant of thine, who depends intirely upon thee, and hath no Confidence in any Thing but only thy Almighty Goodness.

Ver. 3. *Be merciful unto me,* O LORD: *for I cry unto thee daily.*] Whose merciful Help I have also implored with most importunate and incessant Prayers; which is another Reason of my Hope, that thou wilt take Compassion upon me, O LORD.

Ver. 4. *Rejoice the Soul of thy Servant: for unto thee,* O LORD, *do I lift up my Soul.*] And turn the present Sorrow of thy Servant into Joy and Gladness: For I have placed my Hope intirely in thee, O LORD; and expect nothing but from thee alone.

Ver. 5. *For thou,* LORD, art *good, and ready to forgive: and plenteous in Mercy unto all them that call upon thee.*] Who art no less bountiful (which is another exceeding great Encouragement to me) than I am indigent; ready also to pardon those that have offended thee: yea, to shew abundant Kindness to every one of them, in their greatest Distress; when with unfeigned Devotion they call upon thee.

Ver. 6. *Give Ear,* O LORD, *unto my Prayer: and attend to the Voice of my Supplications.*] As I now do, O LORD; most humbly beseeching thee, with repeated Intreaties, to give a favourable Answer to these Prayers and Supplications; whereby I deprecate thy Displeasure, and sue unto thee for Favour.

Ver. 7. *In the Day of my Trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.*] Which I beseech thee let me the rather obtain, because my Distress is so great and so urgent, that thy Power will now be the more magnified in delivering me: as heretofore thou hast been wont to do, upon such earnest Petitions, as these are unto thee.

Ver. 8. *Among the Gods* there is *none like unto thee,* O LORD, *neither* are there any Works *like unto thy Works.*] For nothing is too hard for thee; nor art thou unwilling to do more Kindnesses for us, because thou hast done so many already: But, as appears by thy unparallell'd Works, dost incomparably excel (whatsoever Strangers think, 2 *Kings* XVIII. 15.) all those that are worshipped in the World as Gods; who are not able so much as to help and preserve themselves.

Ver. 9. *All Nations whom thou hast made, shall come and worship before thee,* O LORD:

and

and ſhall glorifie thy Name.] Which ſhall move all our neighbouring Nations, (2 *Chron.* XXXII. 23.) as all the reſt ſhall do in the Days of that great King which we expect, (*Rom.* XV. 9.) to acknowledge thee, O LORD, to be their Creator; and with humble Veneration to ſubmit themſelves unto thee, and to honour thee with their higheſt Praiſes.

Ver. 10. *For thou* art *great, and doeſt wondrous Things, thou* art GOD *alone.*] For they ſhall clearly ſee, by the Magnificence of thy marvellous Works, that thou art infinitely ſuperior to all thoſe Powers whom they adore: And that, in Truth, there is no GOD, but thou thy ſelf alone.

Ver. 11. *Teach me thy Way, O* LORD, *I will walk in thy Truth: unite my Heart to fear thy Name.*] Which I ſo firmly believe, that I deſire nothing more than to be perfectly inſtructed in all thy Will; which I will ſincerely obſerve: knit my Heart, O LORD, in ſuch pious Affections to thee, that it may never in the leaſt diſſent from thee; nor be diſturbed with any vain Cares, but intirely bent to ſtudy this alone, what is pleaſing unto thee.

Ver. 12. *I will praiſe thee, O* LORD *my* GOD, *with all my Heart: and I will glorifie thy Name for evermore.*] Whom I am bound to praiſe, both as the ſupreme Lord of all, and as my moſt bountiful Benefactor, with all the Powers of my Soul: and accordingly, I do now moſt thankfully acknowledge thee; and will never ceaſe to honour thee, and to do thee Service, as long as I have any Being.

Ver. 13. *For great is thy Mercy toward me: and thou haſt delivered my Soul from the loweſt Hell.*] For the Benefits thou haſt beſtowed on me are as ineſtimable, as they are innumerable: I owe my very Life to thee, which hath been often ſnatched out of the extreameſt Dangers; wherein I had inevitably periſhed, if thou hadſt not mercifully delivered me, 1 *Sam.* XXIII, *&c.*

Ver. 14. *O* GOD, *the Proud are riſen againſt me, and the Aſſemblies of violent* Men *have ſought after my Soul, and have not ſet thee before them.*] Behold, O GOD, a new Opportunity to glorifie that Mercy; for proud and ambitious Men (2 *Sam.* XV. 1, 2, *&c.*) have made an Inſurrection againſt me, and raiſed a moſt formidable Army (2 *Sam.* XV. 12, 13.) to take away that Life, which thou haſt ſo miraculouſly preſerved: having no Regard to thy Providence; nor refuſing any Means whereby they may ſatisfie their unjuſt Deſires.

Ver. 15. *But thou, O* LORD, art *a* GOD *full of Compaſſion, and gracious: Long-ſuffering, and plenteous in Mercy and Truth.*] All our Comfort is, that thou, not they, doſt govern the World: who art no leſs compaſſionate, than thou art powerful; readily forgiving Offences, or bearing long before thou puniſheſt them; chuſing rather to heap thy Benefits upon us, and never failing to perform thy faithful Promiſes.

Ver. 16. *O turn unto me, and have Mercy upon me, give thy Strength unto thy Servant, and ſave the Son of thine Handmaid.*] In Confidence of which, I humbly beſeech thy Favour, and gracious Pardon, though I have highly offended thee: Aſſiſt thy poor Servant, by thy irreſiſtable Power, againſt thoſe mighty Forces, which are ready to aſſault me: O deliver me, who am here humbled in the loweſt Manner before thee; looking upon my ſelf as more abſolutely thine, than any Slave that is born in our Houſe can be ours.

Ver. 17. *Shew me a Token for good, that they which hate me may ſee* it, *and be aſhamed: becauſe thou,* LORD, *haſt holpen me, and comforted me.*] Vouchſafe me now in this great Diſtreſs, ſuch manifeſt Tokens of thy Favour towards me, that I may not only be delivered; but all may take Notice of it. And good Men thereby be encouraged to hope in thee; but they that hate me, be utterly confounded, to ſee him whom they intended to deſtroy, not only preſerved, but bleſſed with Comforts proportionable to the Sorrow he hath endured.

PSALM LXXXVII.

A Pſalm or Song, for the Sons of *Korah.*

ARGUMENT.

It is as uncertain when this Pſalm-Song *(ſee LXVII.) was compoſed, as which of the Sons of* Korah *was the Author of it. But it is manifeſt enough, that it was written in Commendation of* Jeruſalem, *ſituate in the holy Mountains of* Sion *(where* David *built his Palace, and afterward ſettled the Ark) and of* Moriah, *where* Solomon *built the Temple. There are thoſe that think it was compoſed upon the Anniverſary of the Birth, or Coronation of ſome great Prince; ſuch as* Hezekiah: *in whoſe Days this City was made more famous; by the glorious Deliverance which* GOD *gave it, from the Power of the King of* Aſſyria's *Army. But this is a mere Conjecture; and I ſhall follow the vulgar Opinion: according to which, the Beginning of this Pſalm muſt be look'd upon as very abrupt; but expreſſes the greater Rapture of joyful Admiration, wherein the Pſalmiſt was.*

Ver. 1. HIS *Foundation* is *in the holy Mountains.*] Great is the Strength and Beauty of this Place, which is founded by GOD in the high Mountains; which he hath peculiarly choſen for the Seat of his Kingdom, and of his Prieſthood.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD *loveth the Gates of Sion, more than all the Dwellings of Jacob.*] Tho' the LORD loves all the Habitations of his People, yet none are ſo dear unto him, as thoſe within the Gates of *Jeruſalem*: A principal Part of which is *Sion.*

Ver. 3. *Glorious Things are ſpoken of thee, O City of* GOD. *Selah.*] There is no City in the World, of which ſuch glorious Things are foretold, or of which any Thing can now be ſaid, comparable to what we can truly boaſt of

of thee; that art the City, which God himself hath separated for his own Habitation.

Ver. 4. *I will make mention of Rahab, and Babylon, to them that know me: behold, Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia: this* Man *was born there.*] I do not deny the due Praises which belong to other Places and Countries; but rather am wont to make honourable Mention among my Acquaintance and Familiars, of *Egypt* and of *Babylon*; and of those who are nearer to us, the *Philistines*, *Tyrians*, and *Arabians*: bidding them observe, that such a notable Person was born among them.

Ver. 5. *And of Zion, it shall be said, This and that Man was born in her: and the Highest himself shall establish her.*] But what is this to *Sion?* of whom it shall be said in future Times, that (not such a single Person, but) this and that Man; a great many Worthies, and far more eminent, both in Learning and in Arms, but especially in Piety, were born in her: for she hath no meaner Instructor than the most High; who shall settle her in a flourishing Estate, by educating and forming her Inhabitants to the most excellent Qualities.

Ver. 6. *The* Lord *shall count when he writeth up the People, that this* Man *was born there. Selah.*] So that when he himself, whose Eyes nothing can escape, shall look over the Register of those Nations, and count the famous Men they have produced; he shall find only some one great Man, and he comparatively of no great Value, was born among them;

Ver. 7. *As well the Singers as the Players on Instruments*, shall be there: *all my Springs are in thee.*] But in thee, O City of God, he shall find Multitudes of excellent Persons, all eminent in their Kind, even among those of lower Rank, as well as in the higher. And there shall be a constant Succession of such, as there is of Water in the Spring.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A Song or Psalm for the Sons of *Korah*, to the Chief Musician upon *Mahalath Leannoth. Maschil* of *Heman* the *Ezrahite*.

ARGUMENT.

Who this Heman *was, is uncertain. Not he who was the famous Singer in* David's *Time; for he was of the Tribe of* Levi; (1 Chron. *VI.* 32. *XV.* 17.) *whereas this was descended from* Zerah, *who was one of the Sons of* Judah, 1 Chron. *II.* 6. *where we find indeed not only* Heman, *but* Ethan *(to whom the next Psalm is ascribed) mentioned as two of* Zerah's *Sons: But we cannot reasonably think that they were, in those early Times, the Authors of these two Psalms; because* Ethan *plainly makes mention of* David, *and the Promise which* God *hath passed to him of a perpetual Kingdom.*

It remains therefore that these two here mentioned, were of the Posterity of those Sons of Zerah, *(and thence called* Ezrahites) *and had the Names of their noble Ancestors given them, to perpetuate the Memory of those who were so famous for Wisdom,* 1 Kings *IV.* 31.

But in what Time they lived, cannot be certainly determined. It is probable when Jeconiah, *otherwise called* Jehojachin *(or after him* Zedekiah) *was taken, and carried captive to* Babylon; *together with Abundance of the Nobility, and the principal Commanders and Artizans,* 2 Kings *XXIV.* 14, 15, 16. *In some of which Ranks I suppose this* Heman *was; who being cast into a dark Prison (which hath made some fancy* Jehojachin *himself to have made it) Ver.* 6, 8. *or otherwise as miserably treated, as if he had been in a Dungeon; bewails his private Calamity: as* Ethan *in the next Psalm doth the publick.*

Why it is called a Song-Psalm, *see upon the Title of* Psal. *LXVII. It was to be sung by the Sons of* Korah *interchangeably, which is the meaning of* Leannoth, *upon a Flute, or Pipe (see* Psal. *LIII.) to the known Tune of* Maschil: *see* Psal. *XXXII. Some Passages in it may be applied to our Saviour's Death and Burial in his Grave, which the Prophet* Isaiah *compares to a Prison; and so is used by our Church upon* Good-Friday.

Ver. 1. O Lord God *of my Salvation, I have cried Day* and *Night before thee.*] O mighty Lord, by whose gracious Care and good Providence I have been hitherto preserved, and on whom all my Hopes of Safety still depend; I have not failed in this sore Affliction to implore thy Mercy, with most earnest Cries, without any Intermission.

Ver. 2. *Let my Prayer come before thee: incline thy Ear unto my Cry.*] Let them at last prevail, I beseech thee; and do not reject my Petition, accompanied with sad Moans and doleful Lamentations: but vouchsafe a favourable Answer to it.

Ver. 3. *For my Soul is full of Troubles: and my Life draweth nigh unto the Grave.*] For my Soul is overcharged with great Variety of long continued Evils: which have brought me so low, that there is but a Step between me and the Grave.

Ver. 4. *I am counted with them that go down into the Pit: I am as a Man that hath no Strength.*] All that know my Condition, look upon me as utterly lost; and I have no Reason to think otherwise, being quite spent, and having no Power at all to help my self.

Ver. 5. *Free among the dead, like the Slain that lie in the Grave, whom thou remembrest no more: and they are cut off from thy Hand.*] I am no longer one of this World, from whose Society I am quite separated: there is little Difference between me and those, who being slain in a Battle, and cast all together into one common Grave, are no farther regarded; or those whose Families are so wholly extir-

pated, that there are none left to preſerve their Memory.

Ver. 6. *Thou haſt laid me in the loweſt Pit, in Darkneſs, in the Deeps.*] For thou haſt thruſt me down into a deep and diſmal Dungeon, (which I can compare to nothing but a Grave;) wherein I lie neglected, and ſee no Hope of being delivered.

Ver. 7. *Thy Wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou haſt afflicted me with all thy Waves. Selah.*] My Spirit is ready to ſink under the Weight of thy Diſpleaſure; while my Calamities fall upon me ſo faſt, and ſo heavily (like the mountainous Waves of the Sea) one after another; that it is impoſſible to expreſs the Soreneſs of my Affliction.

Ver. 8. *Thou haſt put away mine Acquaintance far from me: thou haſt made me an Abomination unto them: I am ſhut up, and I cannot come forth.*] I am not allowed to have any Familiarity with my Friends or Acquaintance; no more than if I were in another World: And as for other Men, they abominate to come into ſuch a loathſome Place; where I am kept ſo cloſe, that I have no Means of getting out.

Ver. 9. *Mine Eye mourneth by Reaſon of Affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have ſtretched out mine Hands unto thee.*] Nor can I do any Thing there but weep, till I am almoſt blind, by Reaſon of the Miſeries I endure: only I ceaſe not to look up unto thee, O LORD, continually, who art my only Companion in this ſolitary and helpleſs Condition; imploring thy Aid with fervent Prayers, and longing Expectations; ſaying,

Ver. 10. *Wilt thou ſhew Wonders to the Dead? ſhall the Dead riſe and praiſe thee? Selah.*] Make Haſte, good LORD, to deliver me, if thou intendeſt any Kindneſs to me; otherwiſe I ſhall preſently periſh; and then, without the greateſt Miracle, there is no Help for me: For can I with any Reaſon expect, that thou ſhouldeſt do Wonders for me among the Dead, when thou wouldeſt do nothing for me while I was alive? and raiſe me out of my Grave, when thou wouldeſt not bring me out of Priſon?

Ver. 11. *Shall thy Loving-kindneſs be declared in the Grave? or, thy Faithfulneſs in Deſtruction?*] Now is the Time to declare the Love thou beareſt to me; and to perform the Promiſe thou haſt made to them that faithfully ſerve thee: for if thou doeſt defer thy Relief, I die; and what can I hope for, when I am rotten in my Grave?

Ver. 12. *Shall thy Wonders be known in the Dark? and thy Righteouſneſs in the Land of Forgetfulneſs?*] Shall thy Power be apparent there where nothing is ſeen? And wilt thou convince Men how good and how juſt thou art to thy Servants, in the Place where they are no more remembred?

Ver. 13. *But unto thee have I cried, O LORD, and in the Morning ſhall my Prayer prevent thee.*] Thus, O LORD, I cry unto thee in the Anguiſh of my Soul: which keeps me awake to preſent my Prayers unto thee, before the Morning Light.

Ver. 14. LORD, *why caſteſt thou off my Soul? why hideſt thou thy Face from me?*] Though alas! they have no Effect; but I ſee my ſelf deſerted, notwithſtanding all my Prayers, in theſe miſerable Straits: wherein I lie ſighing to think what the Reaſon ſhould be, that thou denieſt me thy Help, and takeſt no Notice of me.

Ver. 15. *I am afflicted and ready to die from my Youth up: while I ſuffer thy Terrors, I am diſtracted.*] Which is the more ſtrange, becauſe I faint away under my Miſery, which hath continued many Years, and under the ſad Proſpect I have before me, of more dreadful Calamities: which ſo aſtonith me, that I know not what to do with my ſelf.

Ver. 16. *Thy fierce Wrath goeth over me, thy Terrors have cut me off.*] I only bemoan over again my forlorn Eſtate, which grows ſtill more deplorable; I ſuffer not merely the Effects of thy Anger (Ver. 7.) but of thy ſevereſt and moſt terrible Diſpleaſure: wherewith I am ſo overwhelmed and oppreſſed, that I am ſcarce able to fetch my Breath.

Ver. 17. *They came round about me daily like Water, they compaſſed me about together.*] Which Way ſoever I turn my ſelf, I find that I am inviron'd with them: and they increaſe continually, like Flouds of Water coming from ſeveral Places, and at laſt meeting all together, to incloſe and ſwallow me up.

Ver. 18. *Lover and Friend haſt thou put far from me, and mine Acquaintance into Darkneſs.*] And there is no Friend, no Neighbour, comes near me to give me the leaſt Conſolation: But all they whoſe ſweet Society was wont to help to mitigate my Sorrow, are either dead, or kept from my Sight; or hide themſelves for Fear of being thruſt down, together with me, into this doleful Place.

PSALM LXXXIX.

Maſchil of *Ethan* the *Ezrahite.*

ARGUMENT.

The Author of this Pſalm was near of Kin to him that made the former (ſee the Argument there) and they lived, I ſuppoſe, in the ſame Time. Only Heman *bewailed ſome private Affliction, which was befallen himſelf; whereas* Ethan *(after a thankful Acknowledgment of the Benefits* GOD *had beſtowed upon them, and eſpecially of his Promiſe made to* David *by* Samuel *and* Nathan, *of ſettling the Kingdom upon him and his Poſterity for ever) laments moſt ſadly the publick Calamity; by the Subverſion of the Royal Family and Government, in the Days of* Jehojachim, *or of* Zedekiah. *Whoſe miſerable Fate ſeems, in the Concluſion of this Pſalm, to be bewailed with the greater Paſſion, becauſe it looked like a Breach of* GOD'S *Promiſe to* David: *and gave the* Babylonians, *and other Nations, who aſſiſted in their Deſtruction, Occaſion to ſay; that not-*

notwithſtanding all the Promiſes they boaſted of, and the Fidelity of their God *in their Performance, there was now a Period put to* David's *Family and Kingdom.*

That's the cleareſt Account I can give of the Meaning of the laſt Clauſe of the laſt Verſe but one: where we read that they reproached the Footſteps of his Anointed. *The Word we render* Footſteps, *ſignifies properly the* Heel of a Man's Foot: *and from thence is tranſlated to ſignifie the* End *of any Thing, as in Pſal.* CXIX. 33. *Which Notion of it, in my Judgment, beſt ſuits with all that goes before in this Pſalm; concerning the Stability of* David's *Kingdom: which their Enemies now boaſted (as we would expreſs it in our preſent Language) they ſaw upon its laſt Legs. And the Truth is, it was never reſtored to that Family, till* Christ *the great Son of* David *came: to whom ſome Paſſages in this Pſalm are applied by the* Jews *themſelves; in both the* Bereſiths, *and in other Books; to which* Aben-Ezra *and* R. Solomon *conſent.*

Why this Pſalm is called Maſchil, *ſee Pſal.* XXXII. *But why any ſhould fancy, as ſome have done, that it was made by* Jehojachin, *after he came out of Priſon,* (2 Kings XXV. 27, 28.) *I cannot conceive: unleſs the firſt Words moved them to think that he, who in the foregoing Pſalm ſpeaks of himſelf as in a Dungeon, gives* God *Thanks here for his Deliverance.*

Ver. 1. *I will ſing of the Mercies of the* Lord *for ever: with my Mouth will I make known thy Faithfulneſs to all Generations.*] The innumerable Calamities that are befaln us, ſhall not blot out the Memory of the innumerable Benefits, which the Lord hath formerly beſtowed on us: but I will ſing of them without ceaſing; and indeavour to make all Poſterity believe, notwithſtanding our preſent Deſolation, that thou art faithful and conſtant to thy Word.

Ver. 2. *For I have ſaid, Mercy ſhall be built up for ever: thy Faithfulneſs ſhalt thou eſtabliſh in the very Heavens.*] For I am confident thy Mercy, which is immoveable, and endures for ever, will raiſe us out of theſe Ruins: thy Promiſes being as firm and ſtedfaſt as the Heavens; in which we ſee an Image of the Unchangeableneſs of thy Nature, and of thy Will.

Ver. 3. *I have made a Covenant with my Choſen, I have ſworn unto David my Servant.*] Which thou didſt declare by thy Prophet, ſaying, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 13. 2 *Sam.* III. 9, 10. V. 2. VII. 15, 16, 28.) I have choſen *David* my faithful Servant, to be the Governour of my People; and have made a Covenant with him, confirmed by an Oath:

Ver. 4. *Thy Seed will I eſtabliſh for ever, and build up thy Throne to all Generations. Selah.*] That not only he, but his Children after him, ſhall be ſettled in the Throne: which, though it totter ſometime, or be thrown down, ſhall be raiſed again, and continued throughout all ſucceeding Generations.

Ver. 5. *And the Heavens ſhall praiſe thy Wonders, O* Lord: *thy Faithfulneſs alſo in the Congregation of thy Saints.*] For which ſtupendious Kindneſs, if we ſhould forget to praiſe thee, or in this our calamitous Condition diſtruſt thy Power and Fidelity to make it good; the heavenly Inhabitants will not fail to do it: but in their holy Aſſemblies confeſs them both, with their ſolemn Praiſes.

Ver. 6. *For who in the Heaven can be compared unto the* Lord? who *among the Sons of the Mighty can be likened unto the* Lord?] For there are none of the Powers of the Air they know (much leſs any upon Earth) that can reſiſt the Lord, and hinder the fulfilling of his Will: The mightieſt among themſelves, they are ſenſible, are not to be compared with his Majeſty, to whom they are but Miniſters.

Ver. 7. God *is greatly to be feared in the Aſſembly of the Saints: and to be had in Reverence of all* them that are *about him.*] And when they aſſemble, in the greateſt Numbers, and make the moſt glorious Court, ſtand in great Fear and Dread of him: attending, with awful Reverence, what Commands he will be pleaſed to lay upon them.

Ver. 8. *O* Lord God *of Hoſts, who is a ſtrong* Lord *like unto thee? or to thy Faithfulneſs round about thee?*] With whom I will join, O Lord, the Commander of all theſe heavenly Hoſts; and celebrate thy Name on Earth, as they do in Heaven, ſaying: Where is he among them all that can equal thee, O moſt powerful Lord; whoſe Faithfulneſs is as ready to fulfil thy Promiſes, as the Angels are to execute thy Commands?

Ver. 9. *Thou ruleſt the Raging of the Sea: when the Waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them.*] The Sea it ſelf, which ſubmits to no body elſe, is under thy Government: who, when it is a Calm, makeſt it ſwell, as if it would overflow the Earth; and reduceſt it, when it is in its greateſt Rage, to a perfect Stilneſs again.

Ver. 10. *Thou haſt broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is ſlain: thou haſt ſcattered thine Enemies with thy ſtrong Arm.*] There the *Egyptians*, who had been wounded before with many other grievous Plagues, were utterly overthrown: and with the like irreſiſtible Power the *Canaanites* were ſcattered, at the Entrance of thy People into the promiſed Land.

Ver. 11. *The Heavens* are *thine, the Earth alſo* is *thine:* as for *the World, and the Fulneſs thereof, thou haſt founded them.*] For thou art the Owner of all Things both in Heaven and Earth, and haſt the juſteſt Right to diſpoſe of them, to whom thou pleaſeſt: becauſe the World, and all the Inhabitants of it, are thy Creatures.

Ver. 12. *The North and the South thou haſt created them: Tabor and Hermon ſhall rejoice in thy Name.*] Whether we caſt our Eyes to the Southern or Northern Parts of the Earth; to the Weſt, towards *Tabor*, or Eaſtwards towards *Hermon:* they all acknowledge thee their Creator; and rejoice in thy bountiful Providence, which inriches them with all Things needful for them.

Ver.

Ver. 13. *Thou haſt a mighty Arm: ſtrong is thy Hand, and high is thy right Hand.*] And thy Power extending it ſelf throughout the whole, always effects in every Place, whatſoever thou deſigneſt; and that with an irreſiſtible Force: whether it be to puniſh Evil-Doers, or to preſerve and exalt them that do well.

Ver. 14. *Juſtice and Judgment* are *the Habitation of thy Throne: Mercy and Truth ſhall go before thy Face.*] But none ſhall be able to ſay thou doeſt them any Wrong: Becauſe thou doſt not rule the World merely by thy abſolute Power; but haſt placed thy principal Glory in Juſtice and Equity, Mercy and Fidelity; from which thou never ſwerveſt.

Ver. 15. *Bleſſed* is *the People that know the joyful Sound: they ſhall walk, O* LORD, *in the Light of thy Countenance.*] Happy then are the People who live under thy righteous and merciful Government; and hear the Trumpet ſound, which ſignifies the Royal Preſence of thy Majeſty among them, and calls them to attend upon thee; (*Numb.* X. 10.) They ſhall ſpend their Days moſt chearfully, O LORD; being ſecure of thy Favour, which will let them want nothing that is good for them.

Ver. 16. *In thy Name ſhall they rejoice all the Day: and in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted.*] They ſhall not barely rejoice, but triumph, and that continually, in thy Love to them, and thy Power to defend them: and, walking in thy holy Laws, ſhall by thy Goodneſs be highly exalted, and made ſuperior to all their Enemies.

Ver. 17. *For thou* art *the Glory of their Strength: and in thy Favour our Horn ſhall be exalted.*] For they owe not their Conqueſts to their own Valour, or Forces, though never ſo great; but it is thou who giveſt illuſtrious Victories to the ſmalleſt Armies: And therefore by thy Favour we hope, that our Empire, which is now broken, ſhall be raiſed again to its former Splendor.

Ver. 18. *For the* LORD is *our Defence: and the holy One of Iſrael* is *our King.*] For the LORD is ſtill our Protector, tho' our Prince be taken, and made unable to defend us: He whom *Iſrael* adores, and acknowledges infinitely to tranſcend all other Beings, is our King and Governour.

Ver. 19. *Then thou ſpakeſt in Viſion to the holy One, and ſaidſt, I have laid Help upon* one that is *mighty: I have exalted* one *choſen out of the People.*] Who then didſt reveal thy Mind, in a Viſion, to the holy Prophet *Samuel*, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 1.) when the *Philiſtines* defied *Iſrael*, and grew terrible to them, (XVII. 10, 11, 24.) ſaying; I have provided my ſelf a valiant Champion, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 18.) to be your Deliverer, (2 *Sam.* III. 18.) I have deſigned a Perſon of ſingular Worth, from among the common People, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 11.) to be promoted to the Kingdom.

Ver. 20. *I have found David my Servant: with my holy Oil have I anointed him.*] I have obſerved *David* (1 *Sam.* XVI. 1.) and find him a Man that will faithfully ſerve me: Go, and anoint him with the holy Oil; for I intend him for the Governour of my People.

Ver. 21. *With whom my Hand ſhall be eſtabliſhed: mine Arm alſo ſhall ſtrengthen him.*] With whom I will always be powerfully preſent, for his Aſſiſtance, (1 *Sam.* XVII. 45, *&c.*) and never deſert him, as I did *Saul*: (XVIII. 12, 24, 28.) But my mighty Power ſhall extraordinarily ſtrengthen him, in all his Enterpriſes, 1 *Sam.* XXX. 6. 2 *Sam.* VIII. 6, 14.

Ver. 22. *The Enemy ſhall not exact upon him: nor the Son of Wickedneſs afflict him.*] The ſubtilleſt of his Enemies ſhall not be able to circumvent him; nor the moſt malicious, how powerful ſoever, oppreſs him.

Ver. 23. *And I will beat down his Foes before his Face, and plague them that hate him.*] But after all their vain Attempts, I will not only protect him from their crafty Violence, but ſubdue all his Adverſaries under him, and deſtroy thoſe that hate him, 2 *Sam.* VII. 9.

Ver. 24. *But my Faithfulneſs and my Mercy* ſhall be *with him: and in my Name ſhall his Horn be exalted.*] He ſhall ever find me, not only faithful in my Promiſe to him, but kind above his Expectation: and, by my powerful Aſſiſtance, and his Confidence in it, his Authority ſhall be highly exalted, 1 *Chron.* XIV. 17. 2 *Sam.* VII. 9. VIII. 13.

Ver. 25. *I will ſet his Hand alſo in the Sea, and his right Hand in the Rivers.*] On one Hand he ſhall conquer the *Philiſtines*, and thoſe that live upon the Coaſt of the Sea, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 1.) and on the other Hand the *Syrians*, as far as *Tigris* and *Euphrates*, 2 *Sam.* VIII. 9, *&c.* X. 16, 19.

Ver. 26. *He ſhall cry unto me, Thou* art *my Father, my* GOD, *and the Rock of my Salvation.*] For he ſhall intirely depend on me in all his Diſtreſſes, and fly to me for Succour, as a Child to his Parent; ſaying, with more than uſual Love and Confidence, Thou art my Father, as well as my omnipotent GOD, from whom alone I expect Protection and Deliverance.

Ver. 27. *Alſo I will make him* my *firſt-born, higher than the Kings of the Earth.*] Which I will never fail to afford him, till I raiſe him to the prime Dignity, among all thoſe whom I call my Sons; and ſet him ſo high above all other Kings in the World, that he ſhall be a moſt eminent Type of my Son CHRIST, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords.

Ver. 28. *My Mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my Covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with him.*] Nothing ſhall alter theſe kind Intentions toward him; but I will always have a Love for him, and faithfully perform my Covenant with him.

Ver. 29. *His Seed alſo will I make* to endure *for ever, and his Throne as the Days of Heaven.*] Which is, that his Family ſhall never be extinct; but, notwithſtanding the Changes which all Things are ſubject unto here below, have the Royal Power continued in it, as long

as

as the Heavens endure, 2 *Sam.* VII. 16, 28, 29. *Luke* I. 32, 33.

Ver. 30. *If his Children forſake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments;*] If his Succeſſors indeed ſhall depart from the Law which I have given you by my Servant *Moſes*, and not judge my People righteouſly;

Ver. 31. *If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments:*] If they prophanely neglect, or corrupt my Religion, and obſerve not the reſt of the Rules of Life which I have enjoined them:

Ver. 32. *Then will I viſit their Tranſgreſſion with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes.*] Then will I execute the Threatnings which are in my Law, (*Lev.* XXVI.) upon them; and puniſh their Tranſgreſſions with ſore Diſeaſes, and their Idolatries with ſeveral Plagues, (2 *Sam.* VII. 14.)

Ver. 33. *Nevertheleſs, my loving-Kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my Faithfulneſs to fail.*] But I will not ſo chaſtiſe them, as never more to do good to his Family; (2 *Sam.* VII. 25.) but will ſtill have a Kindneſs for it, and faithfully keep my Promiſe with it, 1 *Kings* XI. 34, 36. XV. 4. 2 *Kings* VIII. 19, *&c.*

Ver. 34. *My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the Thing* that is *gone out of my Lips.*] I will not violate the Covenant I have made with *David*, (2 *Chron.* XXI. 7.) nor retract the Promiſe, which I have ſolemnly paſſed to his Family.

Ver. 35. *Once have I ſworn by my Holineſs, that I will not lie unto David.*] For I have unalterably ſworn by my own incommunicable Excellencies, that I will as ſoon ceaſe to be what I am, as deceive him.

Ver. 36. *His Seed ſhall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me.*] His Family (as I ſaid Verſe 29.) ſhall never be quite extinct; but always remain in my Favour, and hold the Royal Dignity as long as the Sun ſhineth.

Ver. 37. *It ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever as the Moon, and* as *a faithful Witneſs in Heaven. Selah.*] The Moon may as well fall from her Orb, as his Authority fall to the Ground, and riſe no more: Let that be a Witneſs of my Fidelity, when you look upon it; (*Jer.* XXXIII. 20, 21.) and conclude, that after all the Changes and Eclipſes his Kingdom may ſuffer, it ſhall ſtand as faſt as that and all the reſt of the heavenly Bodies.

Ver. 38. *But thou haſt caſt off and abhorred, thou haſt been wroth with thine Anointed.*] But all theſe Promiſes, alas! ſo ſacredly confirmed, and oft repeated, have not ſecured it from a diſmal Subverſion: For thou haſt rejected, with the greateſt Contempt and Indignation, our Sovereign; one of the Poſterity of *David*, and his lawful Succeſſor in the Kingdom, 2 *Kings* XXIV. 20. XXV. 6, 7. *Lam.* IV. 20.

Ver. 39. *Thou haſt made void the Covenant of thy Servant: thou haſt prophaned his Crown,* by caſting it *to the Ground.*] Thou ſeemeſt not to regard the Covenant made with that thy faithful Servant, (which thou promiſedſt not to break, Ver. 34.) and inſtead of raiſing his Family higher than all other Kings, (Ver. 27.) haſt ſuffered it to loſe all its Authority; which, together with the Royal Diadem, is vilely trodden under Foot.

Ver. 40. *Thou haſt broken down all his Hedges, thou haſt brought his ſtrong Holds to Ruin.*] Thou haſt broken down all the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, (2 *Kings* XXV. 10.) and made all his fortified Places a mere Deſolation.

Ver. 41. *All that paſs by the Way ſpoil him; he is a Reproach to his Neighbours.*] So that he hath no Defence againſt thoſe who have a Mind to make a Prey of him, (2 *Kings* XXIV. 2.) and is now ſcorned and derided by thoſe, who formerly dreaded him.

Ver. 42. *Thou haſt ſet up the right Hand of his Adverſaries: thou haſt made all his Enemies to rejoice.*] Thou haſt made his Adverſaries (whom thou promiſedſt to depreſs, *Verſe* 23.) far ſtronger than himſelf: they have executed all that they deſigned, and now triumph in his Ruin.

Ver. 43. *Thou haſt alſo turned the Edge of his Sword, and haſt not made him to ſtand in the Battle.*] His Forces have done him no Service; but being ſhamefully routed, durſt never rally again, to make any Oppoſition to their Enemies.

Ver. 44. *Thou haſt made his Glory to ceaſe, and caſt his Throne down to the Ground.*] Thou haſt put out that Splendor, which we thought ſhould have been perpetual; (*Ver.* 37, 38.) and haſt utterly overturned his Kingdom.

Ver. 45. *The Days of his Youth haſt thou ſhortned: thou haſt covered him with Shame. Selah.*] Thou haſt made a ſpeedy End of the Reign of *Jehojachin*, who in his Youth is made a Slave: (2 *Kings* XXIV. 8, *&c.*) and ſuffered *Zedekiah* to be moſt diſgracefully condemned as a Rebel, to loſe his Eyes, and remain a Priſoner all the Days of his Life, 2 *Kings* XXV. 6, 7.

Ver. 46. *How long,* LORD, *wilt thou hide thy ſelf for ever? ſhall thy Wrath burn like Fire?*] O what a ſad Condition is this, in which thou ſeemeſt wholly to neglect us! But, O Lord, wilt thou never appear for us again, and put a Period to our Miſeries? Wilt thou let thy Anger burn, till we be utterly conſumed?

Ver. 47. *Remember how ſhort my Time is: wherefore haſt thou made all Men in vain?*] Our natural Weakneſs pleads for ſome Mercy; and imboldens us to beſeech thee, that, ſince we muſt not only die unavoidably, but a ſhort Time will bring us to our Graves, thou wilt be pleaſed to let us ſpend that little Time in more Eaſe; and not live, as if we were made for nothing elſe, but only to be miſerable and to die.

Ver. 48. *What Man* is he that *liveth, and ſhall not ſee Death? ſhall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave? Selah.*] For where is the Man, whoſe Conſtitution is ſo firm, that he ſhall not yield to Death? For what Ability have we, though our Enemies

ſhould not thus deſtroy us, to defend our ſelves from the Power of the Grave?

Ver. 49. LORD, *where* are *thy former Loving-Kindneſſes*; which *thou ſwareſt unto David in thy Truth?*] LORD! what a Difference is there between our Times, and thoſe, when thou waſt ſo exceeding good to *David?* And ſwareſt, moſt faithfully, to continue to him for ever thy Loving-Kindneſs, which we beſeech thee now reſtore unto us.

Ver. 50. *Remember*, LORD, *the Reproach of thy Servants*; how *I do bear in my Boſom* the Reproach of *all the mighty People*;] Shew, O LORD, that thou doſt not forget the Scoffs and Jeers; whereby our Enemies augment the Sufferings of thy Servants: there is nothing I lay to Heart ſo much, as all the Reproaches of many and mighty Nations.

Ver. 51. *Wherewith thine Enemies have reproached*, O LORD; *wherewith they have reproached the Footſteps of thine Anointed.*] Who are thy Enemies as well as ours; and have blaſphemed thee, O LORD, and mockt at thee: as if our Slavery were the Effect of thy Inability to protect us; and as if there were an End of the Family and Kingdom of *David*, thine Anointed, which thou ſaidſt ſhould laſt for ever.

Ver. 52. *Bleſſed* be *the* LORD *for evermore. Amen, and Amen.*] But let them laugh on; neither their Scoffs, nor our Calamity, ſhall hinder us from praiſing the LORD, and ſpeaking good of him continually; in aſſured Hope that he will at laſt deliver us. Let it be ſo, we beſeech thee; Let it be ſo, as we deſire and hope: that we may ever praiſe thee for our happy Reſtauration.

The End of the Third Book of Pſalms.

The Fourth Book of *Pſalms.*

PSALM XC.

A Prayer of *Moſes*, the Man of God.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the FOURTH Book of Pſalms: in this differing from the reſt, that as thoſe of the firſt *Book are moſt of them aſcribed to* David, *and thoſe of the* ſecond *in great part to the Sons of* Korah, *and thoſe of the* third *to* Aſaph; *ſo there are few of theſe, whoſe Author is certainly known: and therefore, I ſuppoſe, were all put together, in one and the ſame Collection. The firſt of them indeed being made by* Moſes, *the* Hebrews *have entertained a Conceit (which St.* Hierom *and St.* Hilary *alſo follow) that he was the Author alſo of the* Ten *next immediately enſuing. But, as there is no Reaſon for that, (it will appear in due Place) ſo I can ſee no Cauſe why we ſhould fancy* David, *or ſome of the Children of* Moſes *in his Time, or a* Singer *of that Name, (as* Aben Ezra *conjectures) to have compoſed this preſent Pſalm: when not only the Title expreſly gives it to that* Moſes *who was* the Man of GOD, *(as their Law-giver is called,* Deut. *XXXIII.* 1.) *or that famous Prophet, by whom* GOD *ſpake to them; but the* Chaldee *Paraphraſe, and the very Matter of the Pſalm, ſufficiently ſhew, that it was a Meditation of his, when the People offended ſo highly againſt* GOD *in the Wilderneſs (eſpecially by murmuring at the Relation the Spies brought them of the good Land,* Numb. *XIV.) that he ſhortned their Lives to* ſeventy *or* eighty *Years at the moſt; and ſuffered them not to arrive at the Age of their Anceſtors, or of* Moſes, Caleb, *and* Joſhua: *whoſe Lives he prolonged to an* hundred and twenty *Years.*

Which grievous Puniſhment Moſes *prays* GOD *they may lay to Heart ſeriouſly, and ſo recover his Favour,* (Ver. 12, &c.) *who is the Eternal* GOD, *as he tells them, (in the Beginning of the Pſalm) and had been, in a particular manner, kind to their Progenitors in former Generations.*

This is the Subſtance of the Pſalm: which the Collector of this Book thought fit to place in the very Beginning of it; becauſe of the great Antiquity of this Pſalm, and the Dignity of its Author.

Ver. 1. *LORD, thou haſt been our Dwelling-Place in all Generations.*] O LORD, who ſuſtaineſt and governeſt the whole World, thou haſt been the conſtant Protector of our Nation for many Ages: having afforded all Things neceſſary for the Defence and Security of our Forefathers, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; when they had no certain Dwelling-Place, but

were

were Strangers in the Land whither we are going: and ſupported us in the Land of *Egypt*; where, in a Time of Dearth, thou madeſt an ample Proviſion for us; as thou haſt alſo done hitherto, in this barren Deſart.

Ver. 2. *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadſt formed the Earth and the World: even from everlaſting to everlaſting thou* art GOD.] Where, tho' we have no Towns nor Houſes, we ought to think our ſelves ſafe; and to truſt in thee, who art the ſame mighty GOD Thou ever wait (not only before we and our Forefathers were made, but before the Mountains aroſe out of the Waters, and thou commandeſt the reſt of the Earth, and this beautiful World to appear) and ever wilt be, whatever Changes there be here, without any Alteration.

Ver. 3. *Thou turneſt Man to Deſtruction: and ſayeſt, Return ye Children of Men.*] We have highly offended thee indeed, and ſo did our firſt Parents; who became thereby moſt wretched and miſerable Creatures, and were doomed by thee to return to the Duſt, out of which they were formed: as all their Poſterity muſt do, whenſoever thou ſummoneſt them to obey that Sentence thou haſt paſſed upon them.

Ver. 4. *For a thouſand Years in thy Sight* are but *as yeſterday when it is paſt, and as a Watch in the Night.*] And ſhould we have a Reprieve for a longer Time, than our firſt Father *Adam*, and ſome of his Succeſſors had, who lived near to a *thouſand* Years; we ſhould be wretched ſtill: eſpecially when we compared our ſelves with thee; in whoſe Account the longeſt Life is as inconſiderable as one Day, and that when it is ſpent and gone; nay, as three or four Hours, which paſs away in Sleep.

Ver 5. *Thou carrieſt them away as with a Floud, they are* as *aſleep: in the Morning* they are *like Graſs* which *groweth up.*] But alas! in theſe Ages thou carrieſt Men away ſuddenly; as a violent Torrent doth thoſe Things it meets withal in its Paſſage: they vaniſh like a Dream when we awake; and are as Graſs, which in the Morning is grown higher and ſtronger than it was;

Ver. 6. *In the Morning it flouriſheth, and groweth up; in the Evening it is cut down, and withereth.*] But how flouriſhing and freſh ſoever it then appear, is cut down before Night, and loſes all its Beauty: ſuch is the Frailty of Man; who now is in vigorous Health, and anon languiſhes, and falls to the Earth.

Ver. 7. *For we are conſumed by thine Anger, and by thy Wrath are we troubled.*] This, I am ſure, is our Condition; who have ſo provoked thee to Anger by our Sins, that we periſh in an Inſtant, (*Numb.* XVI. 35, 46.) and are perpetually diſturbed with dreadful Apprehenſions of thy heavieſt Diſpleaſure, *Numb.* XVII. 12, 13.

Ver. 8. *Thou haſt ſet our Iniquities before thee: our ſecret* Sins *in the Light of thy Countenance.*] After many Threatnings, thou haſt proceeded as a righteous Judge, to call us to a ſevere Account for all our foul Crimes; though never ſo ſecretly committed; and makeſt it appear, by our Puniſhments, to all the World, (*Numb.* XIV. 20, *&c.*) that we are a perverſe Generation; though we pretend to thy Service.

Ver. 9. *For all our Days are paſſed away in thy Wrath, we ſpend our Years as a Tale* that is told.] For we conſtantly feel ſome Effects or other of thine Anger; whereby our Lives decline exceeding faſt, and many Times before we can ſay, what's this, is at an End.

Ver. 10. *The Days of our Years* are *threeſcore Years and ten, and if by Reaſon of Strength* they be *fourſcore Years, yet* is *their Strength Labour and Sorrow: for it is ſoon cut off, and we fly away.*] We fall ſhort of the Days of our Forefathers; being now all doomed to periſh in the Wilderneſs, and not to exceed, commonly, the Age of *LXX.* or (if Men be of a vigorous Conſtitution) at moſt of *LXXX* Years: the beſt Part of which alſo, is ſpent in toilſome Travels, (*Numb.* XX. 14. XXI. 4. XXXI. 11. *Deut.* II. 1, 3, *&c.*) and much Sorrow and Vexation; to ſee the ſtrongeſt among us, cut down like Graſs in a Moment, or at leaſt making great Haſte unto their Graves.

Ver. 11. *Who knoweth the Power of thine Anger? even according to thy Fear, ſo is thy Wrath.*] And yet, alas! who is there that ſeriouſly conſiders and lays to Heart, the dreadful Effects of thy Diſpleaſure, which irreſiſtibly falls upon us? (*Numb.* XXV. 1, 2, 3, *&c.*) or with ſuch a pious Fear, as it ought to excite, takes any Care to prevent more terrible Puniſhments than thoſe we have felt already?

Ver. 12. *So teach* us *to number our Days, that we may apply* our *Hearts unto Wiſdom.*] LORD, do thou touch us with a Senſe of thy Judgments; that we may not preſume thus fooliſhly to offend thee, as our Fathers have done: but making a juſt Account of the Shortneſs and Uncertainty of our Lives, may wiſely apply our ſelves to make the beſt Uſe we can of them, in repenting of our Sins.

Ver. 13. *Return, O* LORD, *how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy Servants.*] And then be pleaſed to turn thy Severity into Kindneſs towards us: Let it ſuffice, good LORD, that we have endured ſo many and long Puniſhments; and now at laſt revoke or mitigate the Sentence thou haſt paſt upon us, who, though very diſobedient, are thy Servants.

Ver. 14. *O ſatisfie us early with thy Mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our Days.*] O let us ſee ſome Appearance of thy Love to us; which may ſatisfie and chear our languiſhing Souls, like the Morning Light after a tedious Night: and inſtead of Sighs and Groans, fill us with Shouts of Joy, all the Remainder of our Days.

Ver. 15. *Make us glad according to the Days* wherein *thou haſt afflicted us*, and *the Years* wherein *we have ſeen evil.*] Compenſate our paſt Troubles with future Comforts; and make our Happineſs to equal, if not exceed, the Miſery we have ſuffered.

Ver. 16. *Let thy Work appear unto thy Servants, and thy Glory unto their Children.*] Declare to all the World, that thou haſt not quite for-

forſaken us thy Servants: but wilt ſtill work Wonders for us; and do more glorious and magnificent Things for our Children, though we have ſinned againſt thee, *Numb.* XX. 17, 18, *&c.* XXXI. 2. *Deut.* II. 25. III. 24.

Ver. 17. *And let the Beauty of the* LORD *our* GOD *be upon us: and eſtabliſh thou the Work of our Hands upon us, yea, the Work of our Hands eſtabliſh thou it.*] Let them inherit, by the ſpecial Favour of the LORD our GOD, that lovely and pleaſant Land, (*Gen.* XLIX. 15. *Deut.* VIII. 7, 8, *&c.*) which he hath promiſed to give us: and, for that End, direct and proſper our Arms; that what we ſhall attempt in vain, if we be left to our ſelves, may ſucceſsfully be atchieved by thy Aſſiſtance, (*Deut.* VIII. 17, 18, *&c.* XXXI. 6, 7, 8.) O proſper thou our Undertaking; and make our Arms victorious.

PSALM XCI.

ARGUMENT.

The Author of this Pſalm is not known, but the Occaſion ſeems to have been ſome great Peſtilence; in which the Pſalmiſt commends an humble Confidence in GOD, *and ardent Love to him, as the beſt Security both in that, and in all other Dangers.* Maimonides *thinks (as other of the Rabbins alſo do) that the Pſalmiſt hath a peculiar Reſpect to the Incurſions of evil Spirits, Ver.* 5, 6. *as in the following Verſes,* 7, 8. *to thoſe Miſchiefs which may come from the Hand of evil Men. And as far as thoſe Spirits had any Hand in the Peſtilence here ſpoken of, his Opinion is true; and his Words in general are very ſignificant, that the Pſalmiſt here* treats elegantly of that great Providence, which protects and keeps us from all Evils, both univerſal and particular, *&c. Thus he diſcourſes in his* More Nevochim, *Part* III. *Chap.* 51. *where we have the Reaſon of that Name which is given to this Pſalm by the* Talmudiſts; *who call it* A Song of Evil Spirits. *See* Buxtorf. *Lex. Talmud. in the Word* שיר.

Now there is no Peſtilence ſo likely to have given Occaſion to this Pſalm, as that in the latter End of David's *Reign: who having numbred the People, and not made thoſe Acknowledgments to* GOD *which the Law in that Caſe preſcribed,* (Exodus *XII.*) *had this ſad Choice given him by the Prophet* Gad, *whether he would be puniſhed for his Negligence by Famine, or by the Sword of his Enemies, or by Peſtilence. And ſubmitting to the laſt (which* GOD *ſent a deſtroying Angel to inflict,* 2 Sam. *XXIV.* 15, 16.) *was taught, it is not unlikely, by that Prophet, called* David's Seer, *to recommend himſelf to the Divine Protection, in the Words of this Pſalm. For that* David *himſelf was the Author, as ſome conceive, is not ſo probable; becauſe there is no ſuch Confeſſion of his Sin, and Deprecation of the Divine Diſpleaſure, in this Pſalm, as we read he made on that Occaſion,* 2 Sam. *XXIV.* 1 Chron. *XXI. unleſs we will imagine, that he made this Pſalm after that Plague; to direct and excite all others, to make* GOD *their Refuge, as he had done, in ſuch like Calamities.*

And this is far more probable, than that it ſhould be made by Moſes, *as ſome of the* Hebrews *fancy; for none of the Plagues in his Time were ſo great as that in* David's: *and the moſt of them fell on thoſe whom* GOD *had condemned to die in the Wilderneſs, (as he in the foregoing Pſalm commemorates) and therefore he could not promiſe long Life to them upon any Terms; as the Pſalmiſt here doth to the Man that confides in* GOD, Ver. *laſt.*

The ancient Interpreters by Schacal *(which commonly ſignifies a Lion) do ſo unanimouſly underſtand ſome Kind of Serpent, and not without Reaſon, (as* Bochartus *hath demonſtrated) that I have followed them in my Paraphraſe of* Verſe 13. *and made no mention of thoſe Beaſts of Prey, but only of venomous Creatures.*

Ver. 1. *HE that dwelleth in the ſecret Place of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty.*] It is an undoubted Truth, that he who always makes the Divine Providence his Sanctuary, and, commending himſelf to the Protection of the moſt High, reſts in that, and troubles himſelf no farther; need not fear any Danger whatſoever: but think himſelf ſafe and ſecure in his Cuſtody; who, as he is Almighty, ſo will never fail thoſe that piouſly confide in him.

Ver. 2. *I will ſay of the* LORD, He is *my Refuge, and my Fortreſs: my* GOD, *in him will I truſt.*] And therefore I will now encourage my Soul to flee unto the LORD for Shelter, ſaying; I have no Confidence in any Thing but him alone: He is a better Defence than the moſt impregnable Fortreſs; being the Sovereign of the World, and ſo good to me upon all Occaſions, that I will never diſtruſt his Kindneſs.

Ver. 3. *Surely he ſhall deliver thee from the Snare of the Fowler:* and *from the noiſome Peſtilence.*] I doubt not but he will deliver thee from all unſeen Dangers; particularly from this moſt deſtructive Peſtilence: whoſe Venom catches Men as inſenſibly and ſuddenly as the Snare doth the Bird, when it is laid by a cunning Fowler.

Ver. 4. *He ſhall cover thee with his Feathers, and under his Wings ſhalt thou truſt: his Truth* ſhall be thy *Shield and Buckler.*] He will affectionately defend thee, as a Hen doth her young ones under her Wings: And therefore truſt to his benign Providence, and depend upon his faithful Word; oppoſing that to all the Dangers which threaten thee, as a Soldier doth his Shield and Buckler to the Darts and Thruſts of his Enemies.

Ver. 5. *Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the Terrour by Night:* nor *for the Arrow* that *flieth by Day:*] Then thou needeſt not to be afraid, either

of

of Murtherers and Robbers; whoſe ſudden Attempts in the Night, make them more dreadful: nor of Inſurrections, and popular Tumults, and the open Aſſaults of any Adverſaries.

Ver. 6. Nor *for the Peſtilence* that *walketh in Darkneſs*: nor *for the Deſtruction that waſteth at Noon-day.*] No, nor of thoſe infectious Diſeaſes, which ariſe from unknown Cauſes: nor of thoſe malignant Fevers, which rage in the hotteſt Seaſon of the Year.

Ver. 7. *A Thouſand ſhall fall at thy Side, and ten Thouſand at thy right Hand*: but it *ſhall not come nigh thee.*] Whereby, tho' whole Towns and Countries be depopulated, a Thouſand falling on the left Hand, and ten Thouſand on the right Hand of thee; thou ſhalt remain untouched in that Mortality.

Ver. 8. *Only with thine Eyes ſhalt thou behold, and ſee the Reward of the Wicked.*] And only be a Spectator of the Divine Vengeance, in puniſhing wicked Offenders ſo viſibly; that thou canſt not but obſerve his righteous Judgments, 2 *Sam.* XXIV. 15, 16.

Ver. 9. *Becauſe thou haſt made the* LORD, which is *my Refuge*, even *the moſt High, thy Habitation.*] Becauſe I have placed my Confidence and Hope in thee, O LORD; who art a Sanctuary, to which no Violence can approach.

Ver. 10. *There ſhall no Evil befal thee, neither ſhall any Plague come nigh thy Dwelling.*] Therefore reſt ſtill aſſured, O my Soul, that he will ſuffer no Miſchief to befal thee; nor let this Plague ſeize upon thy Family.

Ver. 11. *For he ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways.*] But give his Angels, who are always ready to obey his Commands, a ſtrict Charge to take Care of thee, and to preſerve thee whitherſoever thou goeſt.

Ver. 12. *They ſhall bear thee up in* their *Hands, leſt thou daſh thy Foot againſt a Stone.*] They ſhall as diligently attend thee, as a Nurſe doth her Child: guiding, ſupporting, and defending thee, with ſuch a ſollicitous Affection; that the leaſt Harm ſhall not befal thee.

Ver. 13. *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion and Adder: the young Lion and the Dragon ſhalt thou trample under Feet.*] No, ſhouldſt thou come among Serpents, Aſps, and Dragons, with all the reſt of thoſe venomous Sort of Creatures, they ſhall not be able to do thee Hurt: but thou ſhalt victoriouſly trample upon them, and triumph over them, *Luke* X. 19. *Mark* XVI. 18.

Ver. 14. *Becauſe he hath ſet his Love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will ſet him on high, becauſe he hath known my Name.*] For ſo hath the LORD declared his Will and Pleaſure to be, when he gave Commiſſion to his Angels concerning me, ſaying; becauſe he heartily loves me, and delights in me, therefore will I deliver him from all preſent Danger, and raiſe him above the reach of all future: becauſe he hath acknowledged me to be the only ſafe Refuge, and relied on my Power for his Protection.

Ver. 15. *He ſhall call upon me, and I will anſwer him: I* will be *with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him.*] I will grant him all his Petitions; eſpecially when he is in any Diſtreſs, I will be preſent with him to afford him ſuitable Comfort: and not only preſerve him from periſhing, but, after a happy Deliverance, make him great and illuſtrious.

Ver. 16. *With long Life will I ſatisfie him, and ſhew him my Salvation.*] And more than that, he ſhall have the Satisfaction of enjoying his Honour to a great old Age: and when his Strength fails him, I will not; but ſtill give him evident Proofs of my Care of him, and Kindneſs towards him.

PSALM XCII.

A Pſalm or Song for the Sabbath-day.

ARGUMENT.

If Adam *had made this Pſalm, preſently after he was created in the Evening of the Sabbath, (which is a Rabbinical Fancy, mentioned in the* Midraſh *upon this Place) ſure it would have been ſet in this* fourth *Book of Pſalms, before that of* Moſes: *who may more probably be conceived to have compoſed it, to raiſe the Hearts of the* Iſraelites *to the proper Buſineſs of the* Sabbath-day: *which was to praiſe* GOD, *when they meditated upon his wonderful Works, not only of Creation, but of Providence in the Government of the World. Several Inſtances of which, in rewarding the good, and puniſhing the wicked, they themſelves had ſeen ſince they came out of* Egypt: *and were to ſee more when they came into the Land of* Canaan; *to keep their* Sabbath *or* Reſt *there, after their long Travels in the Deſerts: with Reſpect to which, ſome think* Moſes *might call this* A Pſalm for the Sabbath-day.

But there is no Certainty of theſe Things, or rather, it is certain, that neither of theſe Conjectures are true. For as Adam *in Paradiſe had no Enemies to riſe up againſt him, nor was troubled with any Workers of Iniquity (ſuch as we read of Ver.* 7, 11.) *and there were no Pſalteries, Harps, and Inſtruments of Muſick then made, which* Moſes *himſelf tells us, were found out by* Jubal: *ſo thoſe Inſtruments were not employed in the Service of* GOD *till the Days of* David: *who may therefore more reaſonably be thought to have made this* Pſalm for the Sabbath, *than either of the other; after* GOD *had given him ſuch* Reſt round about from all his Enemies, (2 Sam. *VII.* 1.) *that he concluded he ſhould be able to ſubdue thoſe who ſhould hereafter adventure to oppoſe him: ſuch as thoſe mentioned in the following Chapters,* 2 Sam. *VIII.* 10.

Ver. 1. IT is a *good* Thing *to give Thanks unto the* LORD, *and to ſing Praiſes unto thy Name, O moſt High:*] Now is the proper Seaſon to give Thanks unto the LORD, for all the Benefits we have received from him: and it is no leſs delightful, than it is profitable, to ſing

Hymns, in the Praiſe of the Divine Perfections; which infinitely tranſcend all that can be ſaid, or thought of them.

Ver. 2. *To ſhew forth thy Loving-kindneſs in the Morning, and thy Faithfulneſs every Night*;] This is the ſweeteſt Employment in the Morning; and no Entertainment equal to it at Night: to commemorate and declare to all, how bountiful thou art; and how faithful in performing thy Promiſes to thoſe, who depend on thy Almighty Goodneſs.

Ver. 3. *Upon an Inſtrument of ten Strings, and upon the Pſaltery; upon the Harp with a ſolemn Sound.*] Which ought to be celebrated with a full Conſort, not only of our chearful Voices, but of all the Inſtruments of Muſick.

Ver. 4. *For thou,* LORD, *haſt made me glad through thy Work: I will triumph in the Works of thy Hands.*] For all are too little, O LORD, to expreſs the Joy I have in the Acts of thy Providence; by whom, as the World was made, ſo it is ſtill governed: it raviſhes my Spirit, and makes me ſhout for Joy, to think how excellently thou ordereſt and diſpoſeſt all Things.

Ver. 5. O LORD, *how great are thy Works! and thy Thoughts are very deep.*] Whoſe Adminiſtration, though I cannot fully comprehend, yet I admire and applaud the aſtoniſhing Greatneſs of thy Works; and reverence the unſearchable Depth of thy Counſels and Deſigns.

Ver. 6. *A brutiſh Man knoweth not: neither doth a Fool underſtand this.*] Of which a ſtupid Man, who looks not beyond his Senſes, is ſo wholly ignorant; that ſeeing himſelf, and other ſuch like Fools, proſper and thrive, while better Men are in Trouble and Affliction; he preſently concludes, thou doſt not meddle in our Affairs; but leaveſt all to Chance: For he doth not underſtand ſo much as this Secret.

Ver. 7. *When the Wicked ſpring as the Graſs, and when all the Workers of Iniquity do flouriſh: it is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever.*] That when the lewdeſt Men grow rich, high and powerful; and their Intereſt is ſuch, that by their Means all the Workers of Iniquity, and few other Men are promoted; the Reaſon is, becauſe nothing in this World is of any great Value, nor of any long Continuance; but after they have flouriſhed a while in an empty Glory, they ſhall be cut down like Graſs; and, which is more, never riſe up again:

Ver. 8. *But thou,* LORD, art moſt *high for evermore.*] And that thou, who ruleſt all Things, though far out of their Sight, canſt as well puniſh, or reward Men hereafter, as at preſent; being the eternal LORD.

Ver. 9. *For lo, thine Enemies,* O LORD, *for lo, thine Enemies ſhall periſh: all the Workers of Iniquity ſhall be ſcattered.*] Who ſheweſt thou doſt not intend to let the wicked eſcape, though now they flouriſh; for thou haſt begun already to give thy Enemies, who have long proſpered, a remarkable Defeat: they have received ſuch a notable Blow, that I am confident they ſhall periſh; and all their Partakers, though never ſo numerous and ſtrongly linkt together, be diſperſed and utterly deſtroyed.

Ver. 10. *But my Horn ſhalt thou exalt like the Horn of an Unicorn: I ſhall be anointed with freſh Oil.*] But my Power and Authority thou ſhalt raiſe to a formidable Height: and crown that Dignity with ſuch undiſturbed Joy and Pleaſure, as ſhall prove the Pious are not always miſerable.

Ver. 11. *Mine Eye alſo ſhall ſee* my Deſire *on mine Enemies:* and *mine Ears ſhall hear* my Deſire *of the wicked that riſe up againſt me.*] Nor the Wicked alway proſperous: for to all other Pleaſures this ſhall be added, that I ſhall ſee thoſe deprived of all Power, who have long watched to do me Miſchief: or certainly hear of the Ruin of thoſe malicious Men, who ſet themſelves with all their Might to deſtroy me.

Ver. 12. *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree: he ſhall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon.*] Which may be an Encouragement to every good Man to hope in GOD, and not queſtion the Juſtice of his Providence; if at preſent he be afflicted: for as he ſhall overturn all his Enemies at the laſt; ſo he will make the Righteous flouriſh (not as the Wicked do, like the Graſs, Ver. 7. but) in a durable Proſperity, like the fruitful Palm, and the ſtately Cedar in *Lebanon.*

Ver. 13. *Thoſe that be planted in the Houſe of the* LORD, *ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our* GOD.] For they are under the Care of the LORD our GOD; whoſe Houſe they frequent: and there partake of his Divine Bleſſing, for the Growth and Increaſe of their Happineſs.

Ver. 14. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth Fruit in old Age: they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.*] Which ſhall not decay, as the Strength and Freſhneſs of thoſe Trees will do with Age; but the older they grow, the more happy Fruits ſhall their Piety produce: and they ſhall abound in Wealth and Honour, as much as they do in that.

Ver. 15. *To ſhew that the* LORD *is upright: he is my Rock, and* there *is no Unrighteouſneſs in him.*] To demonſtrate to all the World, that the LORD is a moſt impartial Governour; whom I have found my firm unmoveable Friend: and, aſſure your ſelves, is ſo juſt and kind, that he will never let Wickedneſs go unpuniſhed, nor Vertue be always unrewarded.

PSALM XCIII.

ARGUMENT.

There is no Title in the Hebrew to tell us who was the Author of this Pſalm: Nor was there any in Origen's *Hexaplus, or in* Euſebius, *as* Theodoret *confeſſes: who found, in the Greek Copy which he uſed, this Pſalm, called* An Ode of David, in Praiſe of GOD: *To which hath been ſince added,* in the Day before the Sabbath, when the Earth began to be inhabited. *Which* Muſculus *thinks was not raſhly done by the Greeks; but ſuſpects they were moved to it; becauſe they knew perhaps that the* Jews *uſed this Pſalm upon*

that

that Day. As indeed they did; for the Words of the Talmud, *in the Title* Kedushim, *confirm his Suspicions; which are these (as I find them set down by* de Dieu, *upon the foregoing Psalm.)* The Canticles which the Levites sung in the Sanctuary, were as follow; on the *first* Day of the Week the *XXIV.* on the *second* the *XLVIII.* on the *third* the *LXXXII.* on the *fourth* the *XCIV.* on the *fifth* the *LXXXI.* on the *sixth* the *XCIII.* and on the *seventh* the *XCII.*

Nor is the Matter of this Psalm more distant from the foregoing, than the sixth *Day is from the* seventh; *for it seems to me to have been composed, when some of those potent Enemies began to take Heart again, and threaten to disturb* David's *Peace and Tranquillity: which, in the foregoing Psalm, he had said he was confident, they should never be able to overthrow. Though in the more sublime Sense, it ought to be applied to the Stability of* CHRIST's *Kingdom: which several of the* Jews *acknowledge is prophesied of, in this, and in all the Psalms that follow unto the* Hundredth.

Ver. 1. *THE* LORD *reigneth, he is cloathed with Majesty, the* LORD *is cloathed with Strength,* wherewith *he hath girded himself: the World also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.*] Let the Nations boast of the Power and Splendor of their Kings, and trust to their military Preparations; this is our Glory and our Confidence, that the LORD reigneth over us: whose Royal Ornaments are not Gold and precious Stones, but Majesty it self; and is not armed with Sword and Spear, but with Almighty Strength, which is ready to fight for us: who have this Comfort also, that he who made the World, will support that excellent Order wherein we are settled; so that it shall not be in the Power of Man, to disturb what he hath established.

Ver. 2. *Thy Throne* is *established of old: thou* art *from everlasting.*] This we know, because thy Kingdom, O LORD, is fixed and immoveable: and did not begin now, when we were made thy peculiar People; but was, as thou art, from everlasting.

Ver. 3. *The Floods have lifted up, O* LORD, *the Floods have lifted up their Voice: the Floods lift up their Waves.*] We will not be afraid therefore, tho' Multitudes of combined Enemies threaten to break in upon us like a Flood: tho' they storm, and rage, and insolently vaunt, as if they were sure to overwhelm us:

Ver. 4. *The* LORD *on high* is *mightier than the Noise of many Waters,* yea, than *the mighty Waves of the Sea.*] Tho' they roar terribly, and be as numerous as the Waters of the Sea; swelling like its boisterous Waves, in a furious Tempest: the great LORD is above them all; and can instantly depress them as low as he pleases.

Ver. 5. *Thy Testimonies are very sure; Holiness becometh thine House, O* LORD, *for ever.*] And thy Fidelity, in performing the Promises wherein thou hast testified thy good Will to us, is as unquestionable as thy Power: no Age shall find it fail: for it becomes not thee to start from thy Word delivered to us by thy Oracle; but it is thy Glory to observe it sacredly for ever.

PSALM XCIV.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm also wants an Inscription in the Hebrew, *to tell us who was the Author of it, but the later* Greeks *intitle* David *to it; and call it,* A Psalm of his for the fourth Day of the Week: *which they had (as I shewed in the Argument of the foregoing Psalm) from the* Hebrew *Tradition in the* Talmud: *And he hath little Acquaintance with the History of* David, *who doth not see that here is an exact Description of the Court of* Saul, *who abused their Authority to all Manner of Oppression and Violence (especially against* David) *without any Fear of* GOD, *or thought that he would call them to any Account for it; as he complains in several other Psalms; particularly* LVII, LVIII, LIX.

But it might as well be penned by any other holy Man, who lived in Times of general Corruption; when (as Theodoret *expresses it) their Kings, and their Princes, (i. e. Judges) loved not to be tied to the Law: but pronounced unjust Sentences, and committed Murthers; selling the Bloud of Innocents for Bribes: of whom the Prophet* Isaiah *sadly complains,* Ver. 21. *of the first Chapter; where* Ver. 10. *he calls them* Rulers of Sodom. *Certain it is, the Psalmist, whosoever he was, desires he may see Justice done upon such Atheistical Oppressors; and desires good Men not to be discouraged under their Tyranny: but patiently expect an happy Issue of all the Vexation which they gave them.*

Ver. 1. O LORD GOD, *to whom Vengeance belongeth: O* GOD, *to whom Vengeance belongeth, shew thy self.*] O Eternal LORD, the Sovereign of the World, in whose Power it is to punish the highest Offenders; and to whom alone it belongs to take Revenge on those who oppress thy People, when they should protect them: make thy Justice conspicuous in a severe Vengeance upon them.

Ver. 2. *Lift up thy self, thou Judge of the Earth: render a Reward to the Proud.*] Call them to an Account, O thou righteous Judge of the whole Earth: And, by making them suffer according to the Wrong they have done, let those proud Men, who have acted as if they thought none could control them, know they have a Superior.

Ver. 3. LORD, *how long shall the Wicked, how long shall the Wicked triumph?*] We can scarce behold these wicked Men without Indignation; it tempts us to Impatience, O LORD, to see how they prosper and triumph in their injurious Proceedings;

Ver. 4. How long *shall they utter and speak hard Things? and all the Workers of Iniquity boast themselves?*] And to hear their insolent and provoking Language; for they care not what they

they ſay; but as they intolerably abuſe us, ſo they audaciouſly blaſpheme thee: the whole Company of them, priding themſelves in the Miſchief they do; and ſcornfully deriding thoſe, that tell them thy Judgments will overtake them.

Ver. 5. *They break in pieces thy People, O* LORD, *and afflict thine Heritage.*] They have cruſhed thy People ſo, that they dare ſcarce complain of their Tyranny: which cruelly afflicts thoſe who are dear unto thee, with all manner of Rapines and Extortions.

Ver. 6. *They ſlay the Widow and the Stranger, and murther the Fatherleſs.*] They have no Compaſſion upon the Widow or the Stranger; but rather ſpoil them, nay, condemn them to die upon falſe Accuſations, (that they may poſſeſs themſelves of their Eſtates) becauſe they have no Patron to defend them: and in the ſame manner they murther, for it is no better, the poor fatherleſs Children; whom they ought to protect from Violence.

Ver. 7. *Yet they ſay, The* LORD *ſhall not ſee: neither ſhall the* GOD *of Jacob regard* it.] And to harden themſelves in their Wickedneſs, they ſay; what do you tell us of the LORD? He knows not, or minds not, what we do here: though there are ſuch evident Demonſtrations of the Divine Providence over *Jacob*, and his Poſterity; yet, for all that, they fancy he doth not regard, nor will call them to any Account for their Doings.

Ver. 8. *Underſtand ye brutiſh among the People: and* ye *Fools, when will ye be wiſe?*] What ſtupid Wretches are theſe? who think themſelves the wiſeſt, but are in Truth the moſt brutiſh of all Mankind: whom I would adviſe, if they have not perfectly loſt their Reaſon, to conſider this, (and ſure they are not ſuch Fools, but they may ſoon underſtand it.)

Ver. 9. *He that planted the Ear, ſhall he not hear? He that formed the Eye, ſhall he not ſee?*] Shall not he hear your Blaſphemies, who gave you the Faculty of hearing? and ſhall not he ſee all you do, who gave you the Power of ſeeing? Is it poſſible he ſhould give to others what he wants himſelf?

Ver. 10. *He that chaſtiſeth the Heathen, ſhall not he correct? he that teacheth Man Knowledge*, ſhall not he know?] He that taught all Nations his Will, ſhall not he correct them when they tranſgreſs it? To what Purpoſe did he make Man to know the Difference between Good and Evil, but that he ſhould obſerve it; and expect, if he did not, to ſuffer for it.

Ver. 11. *The* LORD *knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they* are *Vanity.*] Let them deviſe what Ways they pleaſe, and flatter themſelves with Hopes to eſcape his Vengeance: the LORD knows them all; and will make them ſee one Day, that all ſuch Counſels and Contrivances are but mere Folly and Vanity.

Ver. 12. *Bleſſed* is *the Man whom thou chaſteneſt, O* LORD, *and teacheſt him out of thy Law:*] And far better had it been for them to have been puniſhed ſooner: For not he that proſpers in his Wickedneſs is happy, but he whom thou chaſteneſt, O LORD, when he doth amiſs; and thereby teacheſt to ſtudy and obey thy Law with greater Care and Diligence.

Ver. 13. *That thou mayeſt give him Reſt from the Days of Adverſity, until the Pit be digged for the Wicked.*] Which will quiet his Mind under all his Troubles, and at laſt procure the Removal of them: when abſolute Deſtruction and Ruin, mean time, is preparing for the Ungodly.

Ver. 14. *For the* LORD *will not caſt off his People, neither will he forſake his Inheritance.*] For the LORD will never abandon the Care of his People; nor leave thoſe whom he owns for his peculiar Poſſeſſion, to be utterly undone by the Oppreſſions, which for a Time they may endure.

Ver. 15. *But Judgment ſhall return unto Righteouſneſs: and all the upright in Heart ſhall follow it.*] But how much ſoever his Judgments may ſeem to depart from the Rules of Righteouſneſs, while the Wicked flouriſh, and the Godly are afflicted; they ſhall at laſt return to ſuch a perfect Conformity with them: that all honeſt-hearted Men ſhall be incouraged thereby ſtill to follow the LORD; and by no means to depart from their Integrity, tho' all Things look as if they were unequally carried.

Ver. 16. *Who will riſe up for me againſt the Evil Doers? or who will ſtand up for me againſt the Workers of Iniquity?*] Let them learn by my Example not to deſpond; for who is it but he alone, from whom I have expected, and ſtill do expect to receive Protection and Help againſt theſe malicious Men? who make no Conſcience of what they do, and deſign my utter Ruin.

Ver. 17. *Unleſs the* LORD had been *my Help, my Soul had almoſt dwelt in Silence.*] Whoſe Power alſo is ſo great, that if the LORD had not ſeaſonably interpoſed for my Aſſiſtance and Deliverance, I had not now been praying to him, but laid in a ſilent Grave.

Ver. 18. *When I ſaid, My Foot ſlippeth: thy Mercy, O* LORD, *held me up.*] This was my conſtant Support, if at any Time my Heart even failed me, and I was ready to conclude, I cannot ſubſiſt any longer; then thy Mercy, O LORD, ſent me Relief, and preſerved me from the Danger, wherein I was afraid I ſhould have unavoidably periſhed.

Ver. 19. *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.*] I have had innumerable perplexed Thoughts, and anxious Cares, which have extreamly diſquieted me: But as ſoon as ever I reflected on thy Goodneſs, Juſtice and Truth, they all vaniſhed; and I felt ſuch Conſolation from thence, as revived my dejected Soul.

Ver. 20. *Shall the Throne of Iniquity have Fellowſhip with thee: which frameth Miſchief by a Law?*] And made me ſay, I will never imagin it poſſible, that thou ſhouldſt favour the tyrannical Proceedings of theſe unrighteous Judges: who not only oppreſs thy People, but do it in a Form of Juſtice; and under the Colour and Pretext of Law, make them miſerable.

Ver. 21. *They gather themſelves together againſt the Soul of the Righteous: and condemn the innocent Blood.*] They aſſemble themſelves together, and in full Council combine to deſtroy the Righteous: upon whom they paſs a ſolemn

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Sentence, though he be perfectly guiltleſs, to loſe his Life.

Ver. 22. *But the* LORD *is my Defence: and my* GOD *is the Rock of my Refuge.*] But this doth not diſcourage me (whoſe Caſe this is;) let them decree what they pleaſe, and be too hard for all Laws: the LORD, who hates Unrighteouſneſs, will be my Defence; he, who hath been long very gracious to me, I am confident, will ſecure me from their Violence.

Ver. 23. *And he ſhall bring upon them their own Iniquity, and ſhall cut them off in their own Wickedneſs: yea, the* LORD *our* GOD *ſhall cut them off.*] And more than that, retort it upon themſelves; for the Miſchief they intended againſt me, ſhall fall upon their own Head: He ſhall cut them off in their own wicked Contrivances; tho' it be not in our Power, yet the LORD our GOD, who hath undertaken the Patronage of thoſe that confide in him, ſhall cut them off.

PSALM XCV.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm likewiſe is without any Title in the Hebrew, *but the* Greeks *call it* A Pſalm of David; *becauſe the Apoſtle to the* Hebrews *cites a Paſſage out of it, under his Name,* IV. 7. *Though that, it muſt be confeſſed, is no concluding Argument of its being compoſed by him; becauſe it is uſual to call the whole* Five *Books by the Name of the Pſalms of* David; *when it is certain he did not make them all, but only the greater Part.*

Whoever was the Author, it looks as if it were intended to be a προσφώνησις, *or ſolemn Invitation of the People, (when they were all aſſembled together on the* Sabbath, *or ſome publick Occaſion,* Grotius *in* Hebr. *III.* 7, 13. *thinks on the* Feaſt of Tabernacles, *for which this Pſalm was compoſed) to praiſe the* LORD *their* GOD, *and hear Inſtructions out of his Law: And is juſtly employed ſtill by the Church, in the Entrance of our Morning-Service for the very ſame Purpoſe. For it plainly relates to the Days of* CHRIST, *as the* Jews *confeſs, and the Apoſtle proves, III, IV, to the* Hebrews; *where he demonſtrates to them of that Nation, that the* Reſt *here ſpoken of could not be merely that in the Land of* Canaan, *which their Forefathers fell ſhort of, by their Diſobedience to* GOD *in the Wilderneſs: but another, far better, into which they in* that Day *were to be brought, by the* Meſſiah, *a far greater Captain of Salvation than* Joſhua. *And therefore it concerned them* then, *he ſhews, above all other Times, to take Care they did not harden their Hearts againſt him; when he came to invite them to a Participation of the greateſt Bleſſedneſs: but entertain his holy Goſpel, with a chearful and joyful Obedience to it.* Theodoret *is of Opinion, that it was particularly deſigned for the Times of* Joſiah; *when he made that notable Reformation (which we read of* 2 Chron. *XXXIV, XXXV.) and called them from the Worſhip of Idols, to the Service of the true* GOD. *But it could never be more properly uſed by that Nation, than when the Lord* CHRIST *came to call them to Repentance.*

Ver. 1. O *Come, let us ſing unto the* LORD: *let us make a joyful Noiſe to the Rock of our Salvation.*] O ſtir up your ſelves, all ye that are come hither to worſhip the LORD, and with united Affections let us chearfully ſing his Praiſes: Let us lift up our Voices, and triumphantly laud the Author of all the Good we enjoy; and in whom we may ſafely confide for ever.

Ver. 2. *Let us come before his Preſence with Thankſgiving, and make a joyful Noiſe unto him with Pſalms.*] Let us approach into his Preſence with thankful Hearts, to acknowledge the Benefits we have received from him: and devoutly proclaim with triumphant Hymns, what a Joy it is to us, that we may addreſs our ſelves unto him.

Ver. 3. *For the* LORD *is a great* GOD, *and a great King above all Gods.*] For the LORD is infinitely powerful, and hath a ſovereign Authority; not only over all the Princes on the Earth, but all the Angels and Principalities in Heaven.

Ver. 4. *In his Hand* are *the deep Places of the Earth: the Strength of the Hills* is *his alſo.*] All thoſe Treaſures are in his Poſſeſſion, which lie in the deepeſt and moſt ſecret Parts of the Earth, whither none of our Monarchs can extend their Power: and the loftieſt Hills, which none but the Clouds can touch, are Part of his Dominion.

Ver. 5. *The Sea* is *his, and he made it: and his Hands formed the dry Land.*] The Sea alſo obeys him alone; who hath an unqueſtionable Title to it, and to all the reſt of his wide Empire: for he made both it and the dry Land; with all the Things contained therein.

Ver. 6. *O come, let us worſhip, and bow down: let us kneel before the* LORD *our Maker.*] O be not backward then to comply with this renewed Invitation; but let us all with the loweſt Proſtrations devoutly adore his Majeſty: Let it not ſuffice us to do it once, but again let us, with humble Reverence, bow both our Bodies and Souls, in Token of our Subjection to him: Let us fall on our Knees, and ſubmiſſively acknowledge the Duty we owe to the great LORD, who gave us our Being.

Ver. 7. *For he* is *our* GOD, *and we* are *the People of his Paſture, and the Sheep of his Hand: to Day if ye will hear his Voice,*] Which we above all People have Reaſon to do, becauſe he hath a peculiar Relation to us, and Kindneſs for us; providing for all our Wants moſt liberally, and continually defending us from all Dangers: O that you would therefore without Delay liſten to him, and be obedient to the Voice of your Creator, Conſerver and Benefactor, who calls upon you moſt graciouſly, (by his own Son, *Heb.* III. 6, 7. IV. 7.) ſaying;

Ver. 8. *Harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation,* and *as* in *the Day of Temptation in the Wilderneſs:*] Lay to Heart what I have done for you, and be not ſo ſtupidly inſenſible,

as your Fathers were; at that Place whoſe Name (*Meribah* and *Maſſah*) preſerves the Memory of their provoking Striſe with *Moſes*, and Temptation of GOD in the Wilderneſs, *Exod.* XVII. 2, 7.

Ver. 9. *When your Fathers tempted me, proved me, and ſaw my Work.*] When they doubted of my Power, and demanded new Proofs of my Preſence among them, (*Exod.* XVII. 7.) tho' they had ſeen my wonderful Works, in their late Deliverance at the Red Sea; and in making the bitter Waters ſweet; and in ſending them Bread from Heaven, *Exod.* XIV, XV, XVI.

Ver. 10. *Forty Years long was I grieved with* this *Generation, and ſaid,* It is *a People that do err in their Heart, and they have not known my Ways.*] Nor did they then ceaſe their diſcontented Murmurings, and Diſtruſt of me; but continued their ſtubborn Infidelity, vexing, nay, tiring my Patience for the Space of Forty Years; long before the End of which I concluded, that they were a People whoſe Heart would never be ſtedfaſtly reſolved to adhere unto me; for they did not mind what wonderful Things I did for them, nor what I commanded them to do for me.

Ver. 11. *Unto whom I ſware in my Wrath, that they ſhould not enter into my Reſt.*] Which ſo highly diſpleaſed me, that I ſware they ſhould wander all their Days, and die at laſt in the Wilderneſs, (*Numb.* XIV. 28, *&c.*) and never enter into that good Land, where I intended to give them Reſt after all their Travels, *Deut.* XII. 9.

PSALM XCVI.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm alſo wants a Title in the Hebrew: *but the* Greeks *are juſtified in the former Part of their Inſcription, (which calls it an* Ode of David's) *by the* 1 Chron. *XVI. where we find, that at the bringing up the Ark from the Houſe of* Obed-Edom, *to the Place he had prepared for it on Mount* Sion; David *delivered this Pſalm (together with the* CV.) *into the Hand of* Aſaph, *to expreſs the Joy he had in* GOD's *ſpecial Preſence among them: which, all their Neighbours round about, he foretels, ſhould be made ſenſible of, as well as themſelves.*

This Pſalm indeed is not exactly the very ſame with that; but there is a Difference in ſome Expreſſions: ex. gr. *it is called here* A new Song, *but not there; which ſhews it was afterward altered by ſome divine Perſon, who accommodated it to other Uſes. And very probably by* Ezra, *when they came out of* Babylon: *which occaſioned the* Greeks *to add, in the latter Part of the Inſcription of this Pſalm, theſe Words;* when the Houſe was built after the Captivity. Ezra, *that is, made Uſe of it to expreſs their Joy at the Re-edification of the Temple.*

But it never had a compleat fulfilling, anſwerable to the Height of it, till the Meſſiah *(who was indeed the Temple of* GOD) *came to dwell among us; to give eternal Salvation to us. Several of the* Jewiſh *Writers acknowledge that it belongs to his Times: and accordingly we not only may, but ought, to have him in our Minds, when we ſay,* Sing unto the LORD a new Song, *(for his new Grace, that is, in ſending him to give Salvation to all Nations) and* the LORD reigneth, *Ver.* 10. *and hath all Things put under his Feet. See* Euſeb. *in his* Demonſtrat. Evangelica, *L.* 1. *c.* 4.

Ver. 1. O *Sing unto the* LORD *a new Song: ſing unto the* LORD *all the Earth.*] O ſing Praiſes unto the LORD, for his new and extraordinary Benefits which he hath beſtowed upon us: Let all the Earth join together with us to ſing his Praiſes.

Ver. 2. *Sing unto the* LORD, *bleſs his Name: ſhew forth his Salvation from Day to Day.*] We can never praiſe him enough; and therefore ceaſe not to bleſs his Name, and to ſpread the Fame of his Almighty Goodneſs towards us: but publiſh every Day, with joyful Hearts, the great Deliverances he hath wrought for us.

Ver. 3. *Declare his Glory among the Heathen, his Wonders among all People.*] Tell the Nations round about how he hath glorified himſelf: Let none of them be ignorant of the wonderful Things he hath done among us.

Ver. 4. *For the* LORD *is great, and greatly to be praiſed: he* is *to be feared above all Gods.*] For all our Praiſes fall infinitely ſhort of the Greatneſs of the LORD; who is worthy of the higheſt Praiſe of the whole World: and hath ſhewn both to us (1 *Chron.* XIII. 10, 12. 1 *Sam.* VI. 20.) and to others (1 *Sam.* V. 3, 4, *&c.*) how dreadful he is above all that are called Gods.

Ver. 5. *For all the Gods of the Nations* are *Idols: but the* LORD *made the Heavens.*] For all the Gods of the Nations are nothing worth; being able to do neither Good nor Harm: But the LORD not only made the Earth, but the Heavens too; which abundantly declare the Greatneſs and the Splendor of his Majeſty.

Ver. 6. *Honour and Majeſty* are *before him: Strength and Beauty* are *in his Sanctuary.*] Whoſe heavenly Court infinitely outſhines all the State and Pomp, wherein the greateſt earthly Monarchs live. (*Eſther* I. 4.) For all the Words we have are not able to expreſs the Brightneſs and Magnificence, the Power and comely Order, of ſo much as his Miniſters: an Image of which we have in his holy Place; wherein he manifeſts himſelf among us.

Ver. 7. *Give unto the* LORD, *O ye Kindreds of the People, give unto the* LORD *Glory and Strength.*] Aſcribe therefore unto the LORD, O ye People, from whatſoever Family ye come; aſcribe unto him, that incomparable Majeſty, and ſupreme Dominion and Authority, which you give to imaginary Gods.

Ver. 8. *Give unto the* LORD *the Glory* due unto *his Name: bring an Offering, and come into his Courts.*] And renounce them all; and acknowledging the LORD alone to be the omnipotent King of all the World, do him honour ſuitable

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to the Excellency of his Majesty: bring him an Oblation in Token of your Subjection to him; and humbly worship him in his Temple.

Ver. 9. *O worship the* LORD *in the Beauty of Holiness: fear before him all the Earth.*] O come and cast down your selves before the LORD in his Sanctuary, where he hath fixed his glorious Residence among us: Adore his transcendent Perfections; and let all the People approach into his Presence with a pious Trembling and Dread to offend their Sovereign.

Ver. 10. *Say among the Heathen, that the* LORD *reigneth: the World also shall be established, that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the People righteously.*] Go, ye that are already become Proselytes unto him, and publish every where, in all Countries, that the LORD [CHRIST] is the Sovereign of the World, who alone can make it happy: For he shall settle those in Peace that submit unto his Government; and they shall not be so disturbed as they were wont, with Wars and Tumults: He shall administer equal Justice unto all; and neither suffer the good to be unrewarded, nor the evil to escape unpunished.

Ver. 11. *Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the Earth be glad: let the Sea roar, and the Fulness thereof.*] Let the whole Universe therefore be filled with Joy at this blessed News; which the Angels themselves shall gladly receive, (*Luke* I. 30, 32.) much more ought all Mankind, wheresoever they are dispersed, on the Earth, or on the Sea, and the Islands thereof, exceedingly rejoice; and fill all Places with the loud Sound of their joyful Praises.

Ver. 12. *Let the Field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the Trees of the Wood rejoice.*] Let the Husbandmen, and the Shepherds, and all that dwell in the Fields, leap for Joy: and the Woodmen and Foresters shout for Joy, to see the happy Day approaching; when all the Idols that are worshipped there, shall be thrown down together with their Groves.

Ver. 13. *Before the* LORD; *for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth: he shall judge the World with Righteousness, and the People with his Truth.*] Let them welcome that Day; and meet the LORD with forward Affection, who is coming to them: For he comes to reform the Earth, and will govern Mankind by righteous and merciful Laws; and faithfully keep his Word with all those that truly observe them.

PSALM XCVII.

ARGUMENT.

Some of the Hebrews conceive (as I observed upon Psalm XC.*) that* Moses *was the Author of this, as well as the rest of these Psalms which want an Inscription. And indeed he excelled in this Faculty of composing Hymns, as we learn from* Exod. *XV. and* Deut. *XXXII. and might upon some other Occasion, as well as the Overthrow of* Pharaoh *in the Red Sea, make a Song of Triumph, after some of those great Victories which* GOD *gave them over their Enemies. Which was a Thing in Use before his Time, as it appears by the Fragments of ancient Songs recorded in his Books: particularly that Lamech made by some Poet among the* Amorites, *after* Sihon *had taken* Heshbon *from the* Moabites, *to whom it formerly belonged; wherein the Triumph over their God* Chemosh, *as unable to deliver his Worshippers,* Numb. *XXI.* 27, *&c. And if we could be sure this Psalm was made by* Moses, *I should think it to have been composed after the* Israelites *had conquered* Sihon *and his Land: over whom they triumphed, as he had done over the former Possessors of that Countrey. But the Psalm seems so plainly to have been composed in Pursuance of what was said in the foregoing Psalm, that* the Lord reigneth, *and is King, not only over* Israel, *but all the Earth; that one cannot but think they had the same Author: who shews the Truth of that by the illustrious Victories which* GOD, *as their King, had given them over all those that opposed them. For the* eighth Verse *makes it manifest that this Psalm hath Respect to some Conquests they had lately made over the Heathen: which, I suppose, were no other than those which* David *won over divers Nations; not long after* (1 Chron. *XVIII.* 1.) *he had brought the Ark to* Sion, *and delivered the foregoing Hymn to be sung, to put the* Israelites *in Hope, and their Enemies in Fear, of the great Things which should insue, upon this special Presence of* GOD *among them.*

Which moved the Greeks *to call this* A Psalm of David, after his Land was restored unto him: *that is, after he was made Master of all those Countries which* GOD *antiently designed to be the Inheritance of* Israel. *For that it should relate to the restoring his Kingdom to him, after* Absalom's *Rebellion, is not probable; because the mention of* Idolaters, *and of their* Gods, *Ver.* 7. *seem to determine it to other Countries. In the subduing of which,* GOD, *it is likely, fought for them by some such Tempest as we read of,* (2 Sam. *V.* 20, 21, 24.) *whereby their Enemies Armies were shattered, and so terrified, that they not only fled, but left their Images behind them (such was their Haste) and gave the* Israelites *an easie Victory over them.*

But whatever was the carnal Sense, it belongs, in the diviner Meaning, to CHRIST's *Triumph over the Grave, and all the Powers of Darkness; at his Resurrection and Ascension to his Throne in Heaven: as appears by those Words, which the Apostle to the* Hebrews *alledges out of the* seventh Verse, *and applies to* CHRIST's *Royal Power and Authority over Angels. Which the* Hebrew *Doctors themselves, as* Kimchi *confesses, take to be there intended: and may be further justified from that Exposition which we meet withal in* Misdrach Tenchuma, *of the Words*

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of the Prophet Iſaiah, *LII.* 13. Behold, my Servant ſhall proſper: He ſhall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. *This is the King* Meſſiah, *ſays that Gloſs, who ſhall be exalted above* Abraham, *and* extolled *above* Moſes, *and* be very high *above the Angels of the Miniſtry.*

Ver. 1. THE LORD *reigneth, let the Earth rejoice: let the Multitude of the Iſles be glad* thereof.] The LORD, it is manifeſt, is the Sovereign of the World: under whoſe happy Government, not only we, and they who are already become ſubject to him in other Places, ought to rejoice; but the moſt diſtant Countries have the greateſt Reaſon to be glad thereof.

Ver. 2. *Clouds and Darkneſs* are *round about him: Righteouſneſs and Judgment* are *the Habitation of his Throne.*] His Majeſty is moſt dreadful; and hath appeared in great Terror againſt thoſe that oppoſe him: whom, as he will not wrong, ſo he will certainly puniſh; for he maintains his Authority, and ſupports his Government, by doing exact and equal Juſtice.

Ver. 3. *A Fire goeth before him, and burneth up his Enemies round about.*] Let none therefore reſiſt him, for Flames of Fire proceed from his Preſence; which make the Battle too hot for his Enemies: who can turn no Way, but they feel them flaſhing in their Faces.

Ver. 4. *His Lightnings enlightned the World: the Earth ſaw, and trembled.*] It was his Thunder and Lightning, the Brightneſs of which the World lately ſaw; and were ſo amazed, that ſhivering Pains took hold upon them, as upon a Woman in her Travail.

Ver. 5. *The Hills melted like Wax at the Preſence of the* LORD: *at the Preſence of the* LORD *of the whole Earth.*] The Hearts of the ſtouteſt Kings and Captains failed them; and melted like Wax before the Fire, at this terrible Appearance of the LORD: at the Appearance of him, whoſe Dominion extends over all the Earth.

Ver. 6. *The Heavens declare his Righteouſneſs: and all the People ſee his Glory.*] For he is the Lord of the Heavens: which have declared, by this dreadful Tempeſt, (excited by his Angelical Miniſters) his Severity againſt his Enemies; and made all the People ſenſible of the incomparable Splendour of his Majeſty.

Ver. 7. *Confounded be all they that ſerve graven Images, that boaſt themſelves of Idols: worſhip him all* ye *Gods.*] Which may well make them all aſhamed (and they ſhall be confounded by him, if they will not renounce their Errours) who worſhip graven Images (though of Gold and Silver) 2 *Sam.* V. 21. and boaſt themſelves in vain Gods, who can do nothing for them: Let all that are called Gods, whether Princes on Earth, or Angels in Heaven, bow down to him, as the only Saviour, (*Heb.* I. 6.) and acknowledge his ſupreme Authority over them all.

Ver. 8. *Zion heard, and was glad, and the Daughters of Judah rejoiced; becauſe of thy Judgments, O* LORD.] *Jeruſalem*, the Mother City, hath received the News of thy Victories with a joyful Heart: after whoſe Example, all the other Cities of *Judah* are exceeding glad, O LORD; becauſe thou haſt judged righteouſly, in deſtroying our idolatrous Enemies, and defending thy faithful Servants.

Ver. 9. *For thou,* LORD, art *high above all the Earth: thou* art *exalted far above all Gods.*] Whoſe Hearts are filled with the greater Joy, becauſe thou, O LORD, haſt manifeſted thy ſelf hereby, to be the ſupreme and only Potentate: who ruleſt over all the Earth, and art infinitely ſuperiour to all that have the Name of Gods.

Ver. 10. *Ye that love the* LORD, *hate evil: he preſerveth the Souls of his Saints, he delivereth them out of the Hand of the Wicked.*] But do not content your ſelves merely with this Paſſion of Joy: if you truly love the LORD, hate every Thing which you know is diſpleaſing to him: ſo ſhall you have the LORD of all Things for your continual Keeper; who preſerves the Lives of ſincerely pious Men, and watches over them, with ſuch a careful Providence, that when they are in the Power of the Wicked, he will not ſuffer them to deſtroy them.

Ver. 11. *Light* is *ſown for the Righteous: and Gladneſs for the upright in Heart.*] Be not diſcouraged, tho' the World ſhould frown upon you; but reſt aſſured, that GOD deſigns you, in due Time, more chearful and happy Days: which, if you continue faithful, and ſerve him with upright Hearts, ſhall as certainly come, as the Corn at laſt ſprings up, after it hath lain all Winter in the Ground.

Ver. 12. *Rejoice in the* LORD, *ye Righteous: and give Thanks at the Remembrance of his Holineſs.*] Let all truly good Men rely on this, and rejoice in their worſt Eſtate; that they ſerve ſuch a gracious LORD: Let them give Thanks unto him for his Benefits, and gratefully commemorate how kind and gracious he hath been unto them; that it may be kept in perpetual Remembrance.

PSALM XCVIII.

A Pſalm.

ARGUMENT.

There is no Title here but only this, A Pſalm: *to which the* Greeks *add,* of David: *who, it is very probable, was the Author; or if he was not, it was made by ſome holy Man, in Imitation of what* David *ſaith in the XCVI. (of many of whoſe Expreſſions this Pſalm conſiſts) upon Occaſion of ſome remarkable Deliverance, which* GOD *had newly granted to* Iſrael; *as an earneſt of future Bleſſings; eſpecially of the Coming of that great Bleſſing, the Lord* CHRIST, *to give compleat Salvation to his People.*

Ver.

Ver. 1. O *Sing unto the* LORD *a new Song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right Hand, and his holy Arm hath gotten him Victory.*] O let the new and extraordinary Benefits which the LORD hath beſtowed upon us, provoke you to ſing Praiſes unto him with freſh Devotion: for he hath done ſtupendious Things, and by his Almighty Goodneſs alone, and incomparable Strength, hath wrought Salvation for thoſe who were as unworthy to be helped by him, as they were unable to help themſelves.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD *hath made known his Salvation: his Righteouſneſs hath he openly ſhewed in the Sight of the Heathen.*] The LORD hath declared, by the Wonders he hath done, how mighty he is to ſave and deliver: He made the Gentile World apparently ſee, that he is the juſt Rewarder of all thoſe who piouſly obey him; and will not let the Wicked eſcape unpuniſhed.

Ver. 3. *He hath remembred his Mercy and his Truth toward the Houſe of Iſrael: all the Ends of the Earth have ſeen the Salvation of our* GOD.] He hath not forgot his ancient Covenant with our Foreſathers: but ſo faithfully performed, what his mere Mercy moved him to promiſe, (*Luke* I. 54, 72.) that all Mankind have ſeen what our gracious GOD hath done, and partake of his Divine Benefits.

Ver. 4. *Make a joyful Noiſe unto the* LORD *all the Earth: make a loud Noiſe, and rejoice, and ſing Praiſe.*] Let them therefore ſhout for Joy; let them cry aloud, and with ſtrong and chearful Voices ſing Hymns of Thanks and Praiſe unto the LORD.

Ver. 5. *Sing unto the* LORD *with the Harp; with the Harp, and the Voice of a Pſalm.*] Let nothing be wanting to expreſs your joyful Senſe of the Goodneſs of the LORD; but let the Harp accompany your Songs; let the ſweet Sound of the Harp, I ſay, and the Sound of your Voices, be mixed together with your Pſalms.

Ver. 6. *With Trumpets, and Sound of Cornet, make a joyful Noiſe before the* LORD *the King.*] And let the Trumpet alſo, and Cornet proclaim with a louder Sound, the exceeding Greatneſs of your Joy: while you ſhout with triumphant Acclamations to him, and acknowledge the LORD to be your King.

Ver. 7. *Let the Sea roar, and the Fulneſs thereof: the World, and they that dwell therein.*] Let the Noiſe of his Praiſes be heard like Thunder, throughout all the habitable World: both among thoſe that live on the Sea, and thoſe that are upon the Land.

Ver. 8. *Let the Floods clap* their *Hands: let the Hills be joyful together.*] Let high, as well as low, applaud their Happineſs, and join together with one Conſent; to expreſs, by all the Tokens of Joy, the ſingular Pleaſure and Satisfaction they feel in their Hearts.

Ver. 9. *Before the* LORD; *for he cometh to judge the Earth: with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the World, and the People with Equity.*] Let them meet the LORD with forward Affections; who is coming to reform the Earth: and will govern Mankind, by righteous and merciful Laws; diſtributing to every Man according to his Work.

PSALM XCIX.

ARGUMENT.

The Greeks *intitle* David *to this Pſalm: which ſeems to have been made upon the ſame Occaſion, and to the ſame End, with the* three *foregoing: only with theſe* two *Differences*; Firſt, *that from the Conſideration of the Royal Power of the* LORD *(who had manifeſted himſelf by ſome notable Conqueſts over his Enemies, to be the only Monarch; whoſe Sovereignty extends over all the World) they ſhould mix Fear and Trembling, together with that Joy and Exultation, to which in the former Pſalm he had excited them. And* ſecondly, *that he doth not ſo plainly, as in thoſe Pſalms, propheſie of the Kingdom of the Lord* CHRIST.

But there are many Paſſages, as Theodoret *obſerves, which may be applied to the appearing of our Saviour, and the Infidelity of the* Jews. *Saint* Auſtin *and Saint* Ambroſe *apply to him that Paſſage, upon which the Roman Church builds the Lawfulneſs of worſhipping Images, Ver.* 5. *where the vulgar Latin reading* adorate Scabellum Pedum ejus, worſhip his Footſtool; *thoſe two Fathers think there is no Way to reconcile this with that Command,* Thou ſhalt worſhip the LORD thy GOD, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve; *but by expounding this of* the Fleſh *of* CHRIST; *which is the* Foot-ſtool, *they ſay, which the Pſalmiſt exhorts all Men to worſhip (ſo far were thoſe holy Men from allowing Adoration to any thing that is not* GOD, *or hath not a perſonal Union with him.) And indeed* CHRIST *was repreſented by the Ark; which was the Divine Foot-ſtool (here ſpoken of) but not to be adored, no more than the* Hill *on which it ſtood: concerning which the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, in the laſt Verſe, juſt as he doth of the Ark in this; and therefore we ought to underſtand both Paſſages alike (the Particle in the* Hebrew *being the very ſame before* Foot-ſtool, *and before* Hill) *and tranſlate them thus, worſhip* at, *or* before, *or* towards *his Foot-ſtool and holy Hill: as elſewhere he ſpeaks of worſhipping towards his Temple,* V. 8. CXXXVIII. 2. *And ſo* Menochius *very honeſtly here expounds this Paſſage in theſe Words*; Worſhip in his Temple, turning your Faces towards the Ark, on which is the Propitiatory, which is his Foot-ſtool; ſince he ſits on the Wings of the Cherubims.

Ver. 1. THE LORD *reigneth, let the People tremble: he ſitteth* between *the Cherubims, let the Earth be moved.*] Let the People fret and be tumultuous, if they pleaſe; it will do them no Service; for the LORD is the ſupreme Governour of the World, whether they

they will or no; and they had better with a pious Fear ſubmit themſelves unto him: Though the whole Earth ſhould be in an Uproar, we are ſafe and ſecure; for the LORD is attended with innumerable heavenly Miniſters, who are a Guard to his faithful Worſhippers.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD *is great in Sion, and he is high above all People.*] The LORD, whoſe Palace is in *Sion*, is tranſcendently great: there is no Power on Earth able to oppoſe him; who infinitely ſurpaſſes the united Strength of all People.

Ver. 3. *Let them praiſe thy great and terrible Name:* for *it is holy.*] Let them all therefore praiſe, and reverently acknowledge thy mighty and dreadful Majeſty: for that alone is every way moſt excellent, and hath no Equal; and therefore worthy of all Veneration.

Ver. 4. *The King's Strength alſo loveth Judgment, thou doſt eſtabliſh Equity, thou executeſt Judgment and Righteouſneſs in Jacob.*] For, tho' none can reſiſt him, yet he is not a King that uſes his Power to wrong or oppreſs his Subjects; but to do them Right, and give them Relief, in which he delights: This is thy Character, O LORD, who haſt eſtabliſhed moſt equal Laws among us; and hitherto governed the Seed of *Jacob* with exact Juſtice and ſingular Mercy.

Ver. 5. *Exalt ye the* LORD *our* GOD, *and worſhip at his Foot-ſtool:* for *he is holy.*] Do you therefore, above all other People, extol the LORD our GOD, both in your Thoughts, Affections and Words; and, turning your Faces towards the Ark of his Preſence, proſtrate your ſelves before his Majeſty, in Token of your abſolute Subjection to him: For he is incomparably above all other Beings, and the proper Object of your Adoration.

Ver. 6. *Moſes and Aaron among his Prieſts, and Samuel among them that call upon his Name: they called upon the* LORD, *and he anſwered them.*] Thus did *Moſes* and *Aaron*, two of his principal, and moſt famous Miniſters, *Exodus* XXXII. 11. *Numb.* XVI. 45, 46. and thus did *Samuel*, one of his greateſt Prophets, that were wont to intercede for you, (1 *Sam.* VII. 5, 8, 9. VIII. 5. XII. 19.) Theſe holy Men fell down before him, to make their humble Supplications to him; and he gave them what they deſired.

Ver. 7. *He ſpake unto them in the cloudy Pillar: they kept his Teſtimonies, and the Ordinance* that *he gave them.*] He ſpake to them in a familiar manner, telling them his Mind, out of a Pillar of Cloud; wherein he appeared to them, (*Exod.* XXXIII. 9, 10. *Numb.* XII. 5. XVI. 42. 1 *Sam.* III. 10.) and they, like faithful Servants of his, conformed themſelves to his Precepts, by which he teſtified his Will to them; and worſhipped him after that manner, that he appointed them.

Ver. 8. *Thou anſweredſt them,* O LORD *our* GOD: *thou waſt a* GOD *that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt Vengeance of their Inventions.*] Whereby they obtained great Favour with thee, O LORD our GOD; for when they prayed to thee, thou fulfilledſt their Petitions: paſſing by, for their Sakes, the Sins of thoſe who had highly offended thee; but taking a moſt ſevere Vengeance on all thoſe, who contemned their Authority, and were contriving how to depoſe them, *Numb.* XII. 2, 9, 10. XVI. 3, 31, 35. 1 *Sam.* VIII. 7, 8, 9, *&c.*

Ver. 9. *Exalt the* LORD *our* GOD, *and worſhip at his holy Hill: for the* LORD *our* GOD *is holy.*] Imitate therefore the Piety of thoſe admirable Men; and raiſe your Thoughts, and Affections, and Voices, to extol and magnifie the LORD our GOD, as much as you are able; for you can never do it enough: And in Token of your abſolute Subjection to him, go and proſtrate your ſelves before him, at his Houſe on the holy Hill of *Sion*; for the LORD our GOD is incomparably above all other Beings, and alone worthy of your Adoration.

PSALM C.

A Pſalm of Praiſe.

ARGUMENT.

There is no other Pſalm hath the like Title with this; which is called A Pſalm of Praiſe: *or rather of* Thankſgiving, *and Acknowledgment for Divine Bleſſings, as the Word is tranſlated below,* Ver. 4. *and in moſt other Places. For which Reaſon, I ſuppoſe, it is, that the* Hebrews *imagine (as the* Chaldee *Paraphraſe, as well as other of their Authors, tells us) it was peculiarly appointed to be ſung, when their Sacrifices of Thankſgiving were offered; mention'd* Levit. *VII.* 12, 13. *The Companies alſo, or Quires of them, who gave Thanks to* GOD, *are called by this Name,* Nehem. *XII.* 31, 38. *Which makes it probable, that the Levites ſang this Song upon that Occaſion: which the* Greeks *think was made by* David: *who invites all the World to join with the* Iſraelites, *in the Service of him, who was kind and gracious to them beyond Expreſſion. Accordingly we Chriſtians now properly uſe it, in Acknowledgment of* GOD's *wonderful Love to us in* CHRIST: *by whom we offer up continually ſpiritual Sacrifices; for redeeming us by the Sacrifice he made of himſelf; for making the World anew, and creating us again unto good Works; according to his faithful Promiſes, which we may depend upon for ever.*

I do not know but the Word עשה made, *Ver.* 3. *may be uſed here as it is,* 1 Sam. *XII.* 6. *for* advancing, raiſing, *or* preferring them *(as he is there ſaid to have done* Moſes *and* Aaron) making *them to be what they then were, a famous People, in a good Land: which ſeems to agree beſt with the following Words,* and not we our ſelves *(and therefore I have not omitted that Senſe). For to deny that we created our ſelves, is altogether needleſs; but that it is not to be aſcribed to our Induſtry or Wit, that we are raiſed to a happy Condition, is a proper Expreſſion of Humility.*

Ver.

Ver. 1. *MAKE a joyful Noiſe unto the* LORD, *all ye Lands.*] Let all the People of the Earth lift up their Voices, in triumphant Songs, to the Honour of the LORD; who deſerves all our Praiſes.

Ver. 2. *Serve the* LORD *with Gladneſs: come before his Preſence with Singing.*] Make the Service of the LORD your Delight, nay, greateſt Pleaſure; and when you approach into his Tabernacle, ſhout for Joy that you are admitted into his bleſſed Preſence, to praiſe him with your chearful Hymns.

Ver. 3. *Know ye that the* LORD *he* is GOD, it is *he* that *hath made us, and not we our ſelves*; we are *his People, and the Sheep of his Paſture.*] Conſider that the LORD, whom you worſhip, is the Creator and Governour of the World; who gave us our Being, and all the good Things we enjoy: His we are, and by his Power and Goodneſs, not our own, we are become ſo great and mighty a Nation; whom, out of his own mere good-will alone, he hath made his peculiar People, of whom he takes a tender Care.

Ver. 4. *Enter into his Gates with Thankſgiving*, and *into his Courts with Praiſe: be thankful unto him*, and *bleſs his Name.*] When you enter therefore into the Gates of his Sanctuary, preſent him, not merely with the Sacrifices of Beaſts, but with the moſt acceptable Sacrifice of hearty Thankſgiving; and as you ſtand in his Courts, attending on him, ceaſe not to ſing his Praiſes: Thank him, I ſay, for all his Benefits, and praiſe his incomparable Perfections.

Ver. 5. *For the* LORD *is good; his Mercy is everlaſting: and his Truth* endureth *to all Generations.*] For as his Power is tranſcendent, ſo is his Goodneſs; as appears by his never-failing Bounty towards us, and his ſtedfaſt Faithfulneſs to his Word: for the Mercy promiſed to our Fore-fathers he hath exactly fulfilled in our Days; and will continue to all ſucceeding Generations.

PSALM CI.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Title tells us who made this Pſalm; and the Matter of it is ſo plain, that any body may ſee it is a pious Reſolution of David *to govern firſt himſelf, and then his Court, and then his Kingdom, with ſo much Care; that the Good might expect all Favour from him, but no wicked Man, of any Sort, have the leaſt Countenance or Incouragement.*

The only Difficulty is to know, when he compoſed it; whether before, or after he was ſettled in his Kingdom. The firſt Words of it ſeem to countenance thoſe, who think he was poſſeſſed of it; and newly entred upon the Government; which he thankfully acknowledges. But the Words that follow, Ver. 2. O when wilt thou come unto me, *ſeem to juſtifie their Opinion, who think he was now under* Saul's *Perſecution: yet, having Confidence in* GOD's *Promiſes, (which he long'd to ſee fulfilled) made this Religious Vow, of being a good King; and propoſed to himſelf an excellent Form and Manner of Life, when* GOD *ſhould be pleaſed to perform them. To reconcile both theſe, there is a middle Way lies open to every one's View, that reads his Hiſtory. For upon the Death of* Saul, *he was immediately promoted to the Kingdom; though not intirely: but reſolved then with himſelf how well he would govern; when* GOD *ſhould make him King over all* Iſrael, *as he had done over* Judah. *And ſo I ſhall order my Paraphraſe, ſuppoſing him to reign now in* Hebron, (2 Sam. *II.* 1, 2, 3, 4.) *and expecting to reign in* Jeruſalem, (2 Sam. *V.* 3, 4, 5.) *which I preſume he here calls* the City of GOD, *Ver.* 8. *becauſe there he intended to ſettle the Ark, as well as to fix his Court; when he ſhould be poſſeſſed of it.*

That Paſſage indeed hath induced ſome to think, that he compoſed this Pſalm, after he had made an Attempt to bring the Ark thither; but failing in it, (2 Sam. *VI.* 9, 10.) *ſighs here for its Enjoyment. Which I ſhall not diſpute, becauſe I would not prolong this Preface unneceſſarily. It is ſufficient in my Judgment to ſay; that it doth not ſeem likely, he would defer this Reſolution ſo long after he was inſtalled in his Kingdom. For it required Time to prepare a Place for the Reception of the Ark, ſuitable to the Majeſty it repreſented.*

Ver. 1. *I Will ſing of Mercy and Judgment: unto thee, O* LORD, *will I ſing.*] I will never forget, but celebrate with perpetual Praiſes, that Mercy which hath raiſed me from a low Condition, unto the Throne; and that juſt Puniſhment which I ſee inflicted upon all my Oppoſers: both which I aſcribe, O LORD, to thee alone, and not to my Vertue or Valour; and therefore to thee will I ſing my grateful Hymns.

Ver. 2. *I will behave my ſelf wiſely in a perfect Way; O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my Houſe with a perfect Heart.*] Nor will I ſatisfie my ſelf merely with Songs of Praiſe; but ſtudy, with all Diligence, Integrity of Life, and Purity of Manners: O when wilt thou perfect what thou haſt begun for me; and ſettle me peaceably in my Kingdom? Then I ſhall be able to live more regularly than now in this State of War and Confuſion, (2 *Sam.* III. 1, 39.) and ſo I reſolve to do; ſincerely endeavouring to make my ſelf an abſolute Pattern of Piety and Vertue to all my Court.

Ver. 3. *I will ſet no wicked Thing before mine Eyes: I hate the Work of them that turn aſide*, it *ſhall not cleave to me.*] No pretended Reaſons of State and politick Ends, ſhall make me ſo much as project any Thing againſt the Law, to which I will ever tie my ſelf: For I abhor the Practices of thoſe, who decline that Rule,

Rule, to purſue their own private Deſires; no ſuch corrupt Principles ſhall be entertained in my Mind.

Ver. 4. *A froward Heart ſhall depart from me: I will not know a wicked* Perſon.] I will turn him inſtantly out of my Service, who ſhall dare to ſuggeſt to me any crooked Counſels: I will have no Familiarity with him, much leſs make him my Favourite; who makes no Conſcience how he compaſſes his Ends.

Ver. 5. *Whoſo privily ſlandereth his Neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high Look, and a proud Heart, will not I ſuffer.*] I will be ſo far from liſtening to their private Whiſpers, who, by ſecret Calumnies and Detractions, endeavour to ſupplant their Fellow-Servants; that I will ſeverely puniſh, and baniſh them my Court: nor will I endure thoſe, whoſe Pride makes them overlook all others, as if they were another Sort of Creatures; or whoſe unſatiable Covetouſneſs and Ambition, makes them ſtudy their own Advancement, more than the publick Good.

Ver. 6. *Mine Eyes* ſhall be *upon the Faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect Way, he ſhall ſerve me.*] I will look out for truſty Perſons, Men fearing GOD, and of clear Integrity; and in what part of the Country ſoever I find them, make them of my Privy Council: and no Man ſhall bear any other Office in my Court, but he that lives unblameably.

Ver. 7. *He that worketh Deceit ſhall not dwell within my Houſe: he that telleth Lies, ſhall not tarry in my Sight.*] No ſubtile Knave, that is made up of Shifts and Tricks, or that deviſes cunning Cheats to oppreſs my Subjects, ſhall remain in my Service: Though he have craftily got into it, under a Guiſe of Simplicity; yet no falſe Informer, Flatterer, or any other Sort of Liar, ſhall continue in my Favour.

Ver. 8. *I will early deſtroy all the Wicked of the Land: that I may cut off all wicked Doers from the City of the* LORD.] As ſoon as ever I am ſettled in my Throne, I will uſe my utmoſt Diligence to reform the whole Nation; eſpecially the Place of thy peculiar Reſidence, which ought to be an Example to the reſt of the Kingdom: taking Care that all Offenders be ſeverely puniſhed in the Courts of Juſtice; and, if there be no other Remedy, cutting off thoſe evil Members, who have got an incurable Habit of doing wickedly.

PSALM CII.

A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his Complaint before the LORD.

ARGUMENT.

A Prayer compoſed by ſome pious Perſon (toward the latter End of the Captivity of Babylon, *or rather preſently after their Return from thence, to their own Country,* Ver. 13, 14.) *who was extreamly afflicted, and even overwhelmed with Grief and Trouble, to ſee the Temple ſtill lie in its Rubbiſh, and the Re-building of it hindred by many Enemies. This was the Cauſe of thoſe ſad Complaints and Lamentations, wherein he takes the Liberty to repreſent their Condition unto the* LORD; *and thereby give ſome Eaſe to his oppreſſed Spirit: which began to lift up it ſelf in ſome comfortable Hopes, when he conſidered both the Faithfulneſs of* GOD *to his Promiſes, and the Honour it would be to him, when the Nations round about ſhould ſee their wonderful Reſtauration happily compleated, and thereby be invited to embrace their Religion. Which proved a lively Emblem of the Coming of the Gentiles into the Church of* CHRIST: *the Eternity of whoſe Kingdom is here propheſied of, in the Concluſion of the Pſalm. Which, as* Theodoret *well expreſſes it, may ſerve for any Man's Uſe, who wreſtles with any great Calamity; and implores the Divine Favour for his Help and Deliverance. It may be applied alſo to his ſad Condition, who groans under the Burthen of his Sins; and cries for Mercy: being the Fifth among thoſe Seven which are called* Penitential Pſalms.

Ver. 1. HEAR *my Prayer, O* LORD, *and let my Cry come unto thee.*] Reject not my humble Supplication, O LORD; but graciouſly admit the earneſt Requeſt, which, with lamentable Cries, I preſent unto thy Majeſty.

Ver. 2. *Hide not thy Face from me in the Day* when *I am in Trouble, incline thine Ear unto me: in the Day* when *I call, anſwer me ſpeedily.*] The Diſtreſs wherein I am, is exceeding great; which will move thee, I hope, to moderate thy Anger, and not abſolutely refuſe my Petition: but rather to grant me the more favourable Audience, and to ſend me the ſpeedier Relief; when I implore it in a Time of the ſoreſt Calamity.

Ver. 3. *For my Days are conſumed like Smoak: and my Bones are burnt as an Hearth.*] For my Days are ſpent as diſmally, as if I lived and breathed in Smoak; and the Anguiſh I ſuffer is ſo ſharp, that it penetrates to my very Bones, and makes them as parcht and dry, as the Fire doth the Hearth.

Ver. 4. *My Heart is ſmitten and withered like Graſs: ſo that I forget to eat my Bread.*] My vital Spirits are exhauſted; and flag like the Graſs when it is ſtruck with a peſtilent Blaſt: For, together with my Appetite, I have loſt even the Thoughts of my neceſſary Food.

Ver. 5. *By reaſon of the Voice of my Groaning, my Bones cleave to my Skin.*] Sadneſs hath ſeized on me to ſuch a Degree, that I do nothing but groan and ſigh: which hath waſted me away to Skin and Bone.

Ver. 6. *I am like a Pelican of the Wilderneſs: I am like an Owl of the Deſart.*] I take no Delight in the Company of my Friends; but ſeek for loanſome Places, like a Pelican in the Wil-

Wilderneſs: where I may bemoan my ſelf, like the Bittern in the Deſart.

Ver. 7. *I watch, and am as a Sparrow alone upon the Houſe-top.*] Grief and Sorrow baniſh Sleep from mine Eyes; and make me like thoſe ſolitary Birds, which ſpend the Night on the Tops of Houſes, in doleful Shrieks and Cries.

Ver. 8. *Mine Enemies reproach me all the Day*: and *they that are mad againſt me, are ſworn againſt me.*] This hath expoſed me to the Scorn of my Enemies, who do nothing but upbraid me with my Miſery: and, not content therewith, are ſo furiouſly bent upon my Ruin; that they have entred into a Combination, and ſworn they will deſtroy me.

Ver. 9. *For I have eaten Aſhes like Bread, and mingled my Drink with Weeping.*] Which hath ſtill more increaſed my Affliction, and made me lie down in the Aſhes: where, while I mourn and weep, they mingle themſelves with my Bread, as Tears do with my Drink.

Ver. 10. *Becauſe of thine Indignation and thy Wrath: for thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down.*] Becauſe thy Anger ſtill continues in great Severity againſt us; for after thou hadſt lifted me up in glorious Hopes (*Ezra* I. 5. II. 68. III. 10.) thou haſt daſht them all in pieces (*Ezra* IV. 4, 24.) and thereby given me the ſorer Fall.

Ver. 11. *My Days* are *like a Shadow that declineth: and I am withered like Graſs.*] And whilſt I wait for better Times, my Life declines apace; like a Shadow, which being come near to its utmoſt Length, is ready to vaniſh: For I have very little Strength remaining; but droop and languiſh, like the dried Graſs; which is ripe for the Mower's Hand.

Ver. 12. *But thou, O* LORD, *ſhalt endure for ever, and thy Remembrance unto all Generations.*] All my Comfort is, that though I die, thou abideſt to all Eternity; and canſt hereafter remedy all theſe Evils, which thou doſt not think fit to redreſs at preſent: and wilt, I am confident; for all Generations have tranſmitted down unto us, the Memorial of thy Faithfulneſs, and the glorious Things thou haſt done for thy People.

Ver. 13. *Thou ſhalt ariſe*, and *have Mercy upon Zion; for the Time to favour her, yea, the ſet Time is come.*] It will not be long before thou doſt take Pity upon the Deſolations of *Sion*, and raiſe her out of her Ruins: For the Time prefixed for her Puniſhment being expired, (*Jer.* XXIX. 10, 11.) it is the Seaſon now, the appointed Seaſon, for thy Mercy in her Reſtauration.

Ver. 14. *For thy Servants take Pleaſure in her Stones, and favour the Duſt thereof.*] For her ſcattered Stones are far more dear to thy pious Worſhippers, than the goodlieſt Palaces in *Babylon*: and therefore they cannot look upon her Duſt and Rubbiſh, without the moſt ſenſible Grief and Commiſeration.

Ver. 15. *So the Heathen ſhall fear the Name of the* LORD: *and all the Kings of the Earth thy Glory.*] Eſpecially when they conſider how thy Glory ſuffers thereby: whereas the Nations who now contemn thee, will ſtand in Awe of thee; O LORD, all their Kings and Princes will reverence thy glorious Power, the Fame of which now ſeems to lie buried in her Ruins.

Ver. 16. *When the* LORD *ſhall build up Zion, he ſhall appear in his Glory.*] When they ſhall ſee *Sion* rebuilt, (which the LORD alone can bring about) and his glorious Majeſty there worſhipped with the ancient Solemnities:

Ver. 17. *He will regard the Prayer of the Deſtitute, and not deſpiſe their Prayer.*] And the Prayers of miſerable Captives, who were ſtripped of all, prevail with him, not only for their Liberty; but for their intire Reſtitution to their former Splendor.

Ver. 18. *This ſhall be written for the Generations to come: and the People which ſhall be created, ſhall praiſe the* LORD.] This wonderful Deliverance ſhall never be forgotten, but remain upon Record to the following Generation: who ſhall tranſmit the Memory of it to their Poſterity; that they may alſo look upon themſelves, as a People created a-new to praiſe the LORD.

Ver. 19. *For he hath looked down from the Height of his Sanctuary: from Heaven did the* LORD *behold the Earth.*] Becauſe, in much Mercy, he hath been pleaſed to preſerve a miſerable Nation from utter Deſtruction: and tho' he be infinitely exalted above all our Thoughts, yet the LORD hath graciouſly condeſcended to mind the afflicted Condition of this diſtreſſed Country:

Ver. 20. *To hear the Groaning of the Priſoner, to looſe thoſe that are appointed to Death;*] And to be mov'd by our Groans to deliver us out of a ſad Captivity: and to revive us, when we had Reaſon to look upon our ſelves as dead and hopeleſs.

Ver. 21. *To declare the Name of the* LORD *in Zion, and his Praiſe in Jeruſalem:*] That we might go, and recount in his Temple, the famous Things which he hath done: and make the holy City ſound with the Praiſes of his Power, Goodneſs and Truth; which he hath declared in our Reſtauration.

Ver. 22. *When the People are gathered together, and the Kingdoms to ſerve the* LORD.] When all the People ſhall be gathered together, there to worſhip the Divine Majeſty: and other Kingdoms join with us unanimouſly in his Service.

Ver. 23. *He weakned my Strength in the Way; he ſhortned my Days.*] I had Hopes to have lived to ſee this bleſſed Time; and thought I had been in the Way to it, (*Ezra* III. 8, *&c.*) but he hath ſtopt our vigorous Beginnings, (*Ezra* IV. 4.) and thereby ſo ſorely afflicted me, that I feel I am like to fall ſhort of my Expectations.

Ver. 24. *I ſaid, O my* GOD, *take me not away in the Midſt of my Days: thy Years* are *throughout all Generations.*] Though I prayed moſt earneſtly to him, and ſaid; O my GOD, who haſt ſo graciouſly begun our Deliverance, take me not away before it be compleatly finiſhed; but let me ſee thy Promiſe fulfilled, which thou who dieſt not (as we do) I am ſure, wilt not fail to make good.

Ver. 25. *Of old haſt thou laid the Foundation of the Earth: and the Heavens* are *the Work*

of thy Hands.] For it cannot be too hard for thee to raiſe *Sion* out of her Ruins; who haſt, many Ages ago, created this goodly Fabrick of Heaven and Earth by thy Eternal Word, (*Heb.* I. 10.)

Ver. 26. *They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure! yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a Garment; as a Veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed.*] And thou doſt neither decay, nor alter, in Proceſs of Time, as thy Creatures do; ſome of which ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt eternally ſubſiſt; and all of them ſhall grow old, like our Garments with long Wearing: even the Heavens themſelves, which now enwrap the Earth, as our Cloaths do our Bodies, ſhall be folded up, (*Heb.* I. 12.) and laid aſide, like a tattered Garment, when thou ſhalt command that Alteration.

Ver. 27. *But thou* art *the ſame, and thy Years ſhall have no End.*] But thou (and thy Word) art ſtill the very ſame; and ſhalt always continue ſo, without any the leaſt Variation.

Ver. 28. *The Children of thy Servants ſhall continue, and their Seed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee.*] Yet all that I conclude from hence is only this; that, though I do not live to ſee our perfect Reſtauration, yet according to thy unalterable Purpoſe, the Temple and *Jeruſalem* ſhall be rebuilt; and the Children of thy Servants, who now are in great Diſtreſs, be peaceably ſettled there: yea, their Poſterity after them remain unmoveable in thy Favour; and enjoy the Tokens of thy Divine Preſence among them.

PSALM CIII.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Title tells us this Pſalm is one of David's*: and the third, fourth and fifth Verſes may ſatisfie us, that he compoſed it, after his Recovery from a dangerous Sickneſs, to ſuch a vigorous Health; as the Eagles have, when they renew their Plumes. To that he alludes* Ver. 5. *as* Euthymius *and St.* Hierom *underſtand it. The latter of which ſays, upon* Iſaiah XL. *that he had often taught, the Eagles do no other Way return to Youthfulneſs, when they are old, but only* mutatione pennarum, *by Change of their Feathers. I have expreſſed this a little more largely than ordinary, in the Paraphraſe, (as I have done in the reſt of the Pſalm) to fit it the better to their Uſe now, that have eſcaped the like Danger: who ſhould take Occaſion, when they thank* God *for ſuch a Bleſſing, to imitate* David; *in making a thankful Commemoration of the reſt of his Mercies; both to him and to others; both in the preſent, and in paſt Ages. And the more to excite devout Souls to this, and that I might make their Thankfulneſs the more affectionate, (if they pleaſe to make Uſe of this Hymn for that Purpoſe) I have oft repeated the Beginning of the Pſalm, which I think refers to the whole; and likewiſe put it into a little different Form (of a Soul actually praiſing* God) *without the leaſt Alteration of the Senſe.*

Ver. 1. BLESS *the* Lord, *O my Soul: and all that is within me,* bleſs *his holy Name.*] Bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be the Lord of Life and Health, and all other Bleſſings; Bleſſed be his eternal Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs: with my whole Heart do I bleſs him; with my moſt ardent Love, and the devouteſt Affections of my Soul.

Ver. 2. *Bleſs the* Lord, *O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits.*] Which ſhall be every Day thus employed, and praiſe his Name with continual Pleaſure: I will never forget (how ſhouldſt thou prove ſo ungrateful, O my Soul! as not) to acknowledge the ineſtimable Benefits I have received from his Bounty; which are more than Thought can number.

Ver. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities: who healeth all thy Diſeaſes.*] More particularly, I render thee, O Lord, my moſt hearty Thanks, for thy late Mercies vouchſafed to me: Bleſſed be thy merciful Kindneſs, that after a ſhort Correction for my Faults, thou haſt graciouſly pardoned them; and healed all the Sores and grievous Wounds which they had made.

Ver. 4. *Who redeemeth thy Life from Deſtruction: who croweth thee with Loving-Kindneſs and tender Mercies.*] Bleſſed be God, who hath ſaved me from Death; and not only ſpared my Life, but ſurrounded it moſt graciouſly with, I know not how many Benefits; which make it exceeding delightful to me. (I owe my Friends, Lovers and Acquaintance, my careful Attendants, my warm and quiet Habitation, the plentiful Eſtate thou haſt given me, the liberal Proviſion thou makeſt for me, with all the reſt of thy Mercies, to the Bowels of thy tender Compaſſions towards me.)

Ver. 5. *Who ſatisfieth thy Mouth with good* Things: ſo that *thy Youth is renewed like the Eagles.*] Bleſſed be thy Almighty Goodneſs, that my Mouth (which lately diſguſted all Things, or was reſtrained from what it deſired, or was preſcribed that which was diſguſtful to it) can now reliſh its Food again; and is ſatisfied with many good Things: I can never ſufficiently bleſs thy Goodneſs, who by this means doſt reſtore my Strength, and makeſt my Youth and Freſhneſs return like the Eagles. (O that I may with freſh Delight and Joy be ſtill praiſing thee! and be lifted up to Heaven, (as they are when they have renewed their Plumes) in more vigorous Love, and affectionate Deſires and Endeavours; to imploy all my renewed Strength in thy faithful Service.)

Ver. 6. *The* Lord *executeth Righteouſneſs and Judgment for all* that are *oppreſſed.*] Nor am I alone obliged to my gracious Lord for his ſingular Favour to me; but, bleſſed be his Name, he relieves all thoſe who ſuffer Wrong; and doth Juſtice upon their Oppreſſors, who are too mighty for them.

Ver.

Ver. 7. *He made known his Ways unto Moſes, his Acts unto the Children of Iſrael.*] *Moſes* and the reſt of our Forefathers, are Witneſſes of this: whom the LORD delivered, in a ſtupendious Manner, out of the Houſe of Bondage.

Ver. 8. *The* LORD *is merciful and gracious, ſlow to Anger, and plenteous in Mercy.*] And by other Methods of his Providence towards them, and dealing with them, declared how bountiful his bleſſed Nature is, and how ready to forgive: forbearing long when Men deſerve to be puniſhed; and ſoon releaſing them from their Pain, when they heartily repent of their Folly.

Ver. 9. *He will not always chide: neither will he keep* his Anger *for ever.*] He doth not love, bleſſed be his Name, to be always chaſtiſing us for our Faults: And when he doth chaſtiſe us, he neither loves to prolong our Miſeries; nor to inflict them proportionable to our Deſerts.

Ver. 10. *He hath not dealt with us after our Sins: nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities.*] No, bleſſed be his holy Name, there is Mercy even in our Puniſhments: our Sufferings are never ſo great as our Sins; but we might juſtly ſuffer a great deal more than we do, for our Faults.

Ver. 11. *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth: ſo great is his Mercy toward them that fear him.*] And were we never ſo obedient, there is not a greater Diſproportion between the vaſt Circumference of the Heavens, and this little Spot of Earth; than there is between his Mercies towards us, and our ſmall Services.

Ver. 12. *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt: ſo far hath he removed our Tranſgreſſions from us.*] To thoſe Mercies alone it is to be aſcribed, that we are not bemoaning our ſelves under innumerable Miſeries: but he hath quite taken away his Wrath from us; and, adored be his Goodneſs, perfectly remitted the Puniſhment due to our manifold Offences.

Ver. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth* his *Children: ſo the* LORD *pitieth them that fear him.*] O what Bowels of Mercy are theſe! No Father can be more indulgent and tender-hearted to his returning Children, than the LORD, bleſſed be his Name, is to thoſe who ſo reform by his Chaſtiſements, as to fear hereafter to offend him.

Ver. 14. *For he knoweth our Frame: he remembreth that we* are *Duſt.*] He eaſily relents, and takes Compaſſion on them: conſidering how frail he hath made them; and how ſoon of themſelves they will moulder into the Duſt, out of which he took them.

Ver. 15. *As for Man, his Days* are *as Graſs: as a Flower of the Field, ſo he flouriſheth.*] For what is Man, that the Almighty ſhould contend with him? He looks freſh and fair; but alas! is as feeble as the Graſs, and as a Flower in the Field; whoſe Beauty is far greater than its Strength.

Ver. 16. *For the Wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone; and the Place thereof ſhall know it no more.*] Many Accidents ſnatch him away, even in his Prime: juſt as the biting Wind, to which the Field Flowers are expoſed, blaſts them on a ſudden, and they ſpring up no more in the Place that was adorned with them.

Ver. 17. *But the Mercy of the* LORD *is from everlaſting to everlaſting, upon them that fear him: and his Righteouſneſs unto Childrens Children:*] O how much doth this magnifie the wonderful Mercy of our GOD! who deſigns to be everlaſtingly kind (bleſſed be his Goodneſs) to ſuch ſhort-liv'd Creatures as we are: rewarding the faithful Services of a few Years, with eternal Life to our ſelves; and with many Bleſſings to our Poſterity in future Generations.

Ver. 18. *To ſuch as keep his Covenant, and to thoſe that remember his Commandments to do them.*] There is no doubt of this; which hath been verified in thoſe who have ſincerely kept their Faith with him; and not only promiſed, but conſtantly performed the Obedience they owed him.

Ver. 19. *The* LORD *hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens: and his Kingdom ruleth over all.*] For none can hinder thee, O moſt mighty LORD, from being as kind as thou pleaſeſt: who art the univerſal Monarch; the bleſſed and only Potentate; to whom, not only the greateſt Men on Earth, but the higheſt Powers in Heaven are ſubject.

Ver. 20. *Bleſs the* LORD, *ye his Angels, that excel in Strength, that do his Commandments, hearkening unto the Voice of his Word.*] Let the Angels therefore, who know his Greatneſs, Power, and gracious Providence, better than I, bleſs his holy Name: Let thoſe mighty ones, whoſe Strength ſurpaſſes all the Powers on Earth, and yet never diſpute his ſacred Commands, give Praiſe unto him, with all their Might; and with the ſame Chearfulneſs wherewith they obey his Word.

Ver. 21. *Bleſs ye the* LORD, *all ye his Hoſts, ye Miniſters of his that do his Pleaſure.*] Let the whole Company of Heaven, all the ſeveral Hoſts of thoſe glorious Creatures, who have been employed by his Majeſty ſo many Ways for our good, and underſtand how much we are beholden to his Love; ſpeak good of his Name, and bleſs his Mercy, both to themſelves and unto us.

Ver. 22. *Bleſs the* LORD, *all his Works, in all Places of his Dominion: bleſs the* LORD, *O my Soul.*] Yea, let every Creature, throughout the wide World, proclaim as well as it is able, the Loving-kindneſs of the LORD: Let none of them be ſilent, but all with one Conſent bleſs his holy Name: And thou, O my Soul, be ſure thou never forget to make one; O fail not to bear thy Part in this joyful Quire, that daily ſing his Praiſe.

PSALM CIV.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing and the following Pſalm being certainly compoſed by David, *the Greeks, and from them ſeveral other ancient Interpreters, have aſcribed this alſo to the ſame Author.*

For

For which they had this farther Reaſon, that it begins (as Aben Ezra *obſerves) juſt as the foregoing Pſalm ends: and celebrates the mighty Power and Goodneſs of* God, *in the Fabrick of the World; as the* CIII. *doth his Benefits to himſelf, and to the reſt of the Children of Men.*

As for the Occaſion of it, we may look upon it as a probable Opinion, that when David *thought of building a Houſe for the Divine Service, and* God *ſent* Nathan *to forbid him;* (2 Sam. *VII.* 5.) *he fell not long after into the Contemplation of the Majeſty of* God; *who having built this great World, as his Temple, needed none of his erecting; though he would be pleaſed to accept one for the burning Sacrifice before him, as* Solomon *afterward ſpeaks,* 2 Chron. *II.* 6. *To ſtrengthen this Conjecture of mine, it may be obſerved, that he begins this Pſalm with ſuch an Admiration of* God's *moſt excellent Perfection, as we meet withal in* David's *Prayer: immediately after* God *had certified him of his Love towards him, though he would not let him build him an Houſe,* 2 Sam. *VII.* 22. Thou art great, O Lord, for there is none like unto Thee. *In the ſame Manner he ſaith here,* O Lord my God, Thou art very great: *as he proceeds to demonſtrate from his wonderful Works. And firſt he begins with the Heavens, the Clouds, and the Angels: and then comes down to the Earth, the Sea, the Mountains, Valleys, Fountains, and other inferior Things: Which depend ſo much upon the Sun, the Moon, and heavenly Bodies; that all of them together declare the moſt admirable Wiſdom of him by whom they were compoſed: and ſhould excite all Mankind to his perpetual Praiſes. Which that we may do the more affectionately, when we uſe this Hymn, I have often repeated the Beginning of it, as I did in the foregoing.*

Ver. 1. *BLESS the* Lord, *O my Soul: O* Lord *my* God, *thou art very great, thou art cloathed with Honour and Majeſty.*] Stir up thy ſelf, O my Soul, with all thy Might, to meditate the Praiſes of the Lord. For the higheſt of all our Thoughts are infinitely below thy Greatneſs, O Lord, my moſt gracious God: who haſt ſhewn in thy moſt admirable Works, the ſurpaſſing Excellence of thy Majeſty; which we can never worthily celebrate with all our Praiſes.

Ver. 2. *Who covereſt* thy ſelf *with Light, as* with *a Garment: who ſtretcheſt out the Heavens like a Curtain.*] The Light, which dazzles our Eyes with its Splendour, is the Royal Robe, wherein thy inviſible and incomprehenſible Brightneſs appears unto us: and the ſpacious Heavens are the Royal Pavilion, which thy Sovereign Power hath extended, like a Canopy, for thy Majeſty, in this great Palace of the World.

Ver. 3. *Who layeth the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters, who maketh the Clouds his Chariots, who walketh upon the Wings of the Wind.*] The Floor of whoſe Chambers, which the Lord hath laid in the upper Region of the Air; O how highly is it advanced above the Top of the ſtatelieſt Piles that are raiſed by earthly Monarchs: whoſe pompous Chariots (whereof they boaſt) fall infinitely ſhort of thoſe glorious Clouds, wherein he makes himſelf preſent to us; as their ſwifteſt Horſes are ſlow-paced, in Compariſon with the quick Motion, more ſpeedy than the Wind, wherewith he viſits every Part of his Dominion.

Ver. 4. *Who maketh his Angels Spirits: his Miniſters a flaming Fire.*] Into which he ſends his Angels (and what King is there that hath ſuch noble Miniſters?) ſometimes in vehement Winds, and ſometimes in Lightning and Thunder, whereby they execute his Royal Pleaſure.

Ver. 5. Who *laid the Foundations of the Earth,* that *it ſhould not be removed for ever.*] Who hath ſettled the maſſy Globe of the Earth even in the liquid Air, upon ſuch firm Foundations; that none of thoſe Storms and Tempeſts, which beat upon it from without, nor any Commotions from within, can ever ſtir it out of the Place he hath fixed for it.

Ver. 6. *Thou coveredſt it with the Deep,* as with *a Garment: the Waters ſtood above the Mountains.*] It was all covered over at the firſt with Waters, (*Gen.* I. 2.) which were ſo deep, that there was no Appearance of the higheſt Mountains.

Ver. 7. *At thy Rebuke they fled: at the Voice of thy Thunder they haſted away.*] Till thy omnipotent Word charged them to retire, (*Gen.* I. 9.) at which they ſtarted back, and ſuddenly ſhrunk away; as an affrighted Slave doth, when he hears the Thunder of his Maſter's Threatnings, if his Commands be not obeyed.

Ver. 8. *They go up by the Mountains: they go down by the Valleys unto the Place which thou haſt founded for them.*] Immediately the dry Land was ſeen; part of which (by thy wonderful Contrivance, O Lord) roſe up in lofty Hills; and the reſt ſunk down in lowly Valleys: where thou haſt cut Channels for the Waters to run into the main Ocean; the Place thou haſt appointed for them.

Ver. 9. *Thou haſt ſet a Bound that they may not paſs over: that they turn not again to cover the Earth.*] And there, tho' they reſtleſly toſs and ſwell, yet they cannot get over the Shores, wherein thou haſt incloſed them: nor ſhall they ever recover their former Liberty, to overflow the Earth again.

Ver. 10. *He ſendeth the Springs into the Valleys,* which *run among the Hills.*] But ſtill, ſuch is the admirable Providence of the Lord, they climb, through the hollow Places of the Earth, up the ſteepeſt Parts of it; and there break out in Springs: which fall down into the Valleys, to make Brooks and Rivers, that run between the Hills; which, on either Side, ſend into them freſh Supplies to enlarge their Streams.

Ver. 11. *They give Drink to every Beaſt of the Field, the wild Aſſes quench their Thirſt.*] Which afford, not only to us, but to all the Beaſts of the Earth, ſuch abundant Refreſhment, when they are dry; that even the dull Aſſes,

who

who live in parched Deſarts, find them out to quench their Thirſt.

Ver. 12. *By them ſhall the Fowls of the Heaven have their Habitation, which ſing among the Branches.*] The Birds of the Air alſo delight to reſort thither: where having wet their Throats, they ſit and chaunt their various Notes among the thick Boughs of the Trees, which grow upon the Banks.

Ver. 13. *He watereth the Hills from his Chambers: the Earth is ſatisfied with the Fruit of thy Works.*] As for the Hills, which conſtantly thus enrich the lower Grounds, he waters them from the Regions above: whence Dews diſtil, and Showers of Rain come pouring down, by thy marvellous Contrivance, O LORD, unto the Satisfaction of them, and of all the reſt of the Earth.

Ver. 14. *He cauſeth the Graſs to grow for the Cattel, and Herb for the Service of Man: that he may bring forth Food out of the Earth:*] O bleſs the LORD, my Soul, who, by this means, provideth the Beaſts with Graſs and Hay; and us with all Variety of Herbs, and Roots, and Fruit, and Pulſe: which he cauſes to ſprout out of the Earth; that we may never want what is neceſſary for our Food, or for our Phyſick.

Ver. 15. *And Wine* that *maketh glad the Heart of Man,* and *Oil to make* his *Face to ſhine, and Bread* which *ſtrengtheneth Man's Heart.*] But rather take our Pleaſure and Delight in the rich Wines, which he produces to chear the drooping Spirits of miſerable Men: together with Oil to anoint their Heads; and Bread to recruit their Strength, when it is ſpent with Toil and Labour.

Ver. 16. *The Trees of the* LORD *are full of* Sap: *the Cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted.*] Bleſſed be the LORD, who by this means alſo ſupplies, with abundant Nouriſhment, the largeſt Trees; which are not planted by the Art, nor watered by the Care of Man, but by his Almighty Providence: who makes whole Foreſts of them grow, as the Cedars in *Libanus* do, even upon the moſt barren and ſtony Mountains.

Ver. 17. *Where the Birds make their Neſts:* as for *the Stork, the Fir-trees are her Houſe.*] In theſe Trees the Birds, both ſmall and great, build themſelves convenient Habitations: and ſome of them (as the Stork, for inſtance, who ſeats her Neſt on the Top of lofty Pines and Fir-trees) with admirable Artifice.

Ver. 18. *The high Hills* are *a Refuge for the wild Goats,* and *the Rocks for the Conies.*] And with no leſs Safety the wild Goats depoſit their Young, in the Tops of thoſe craggy Mountains; whither they can climb as eaſily, as the Birds fly to the Tops of Trees: and other feeble Creatures creep into the Rocks; and there lie ſecure from the Violence that ſtronger Beaſts would offer to them.

Ver. 19. *He appointeth the Moon for Seaſons; the Sun knoweth his going down.*] By his moſt wiſe Contrivance, the Moon hath her Full, and her Wane; and the Sun doth not always ſhine; but obſerves a conſtant Time for its going down.

Ver. 20. *Thou makeſt Darkneſs, and it is Night: wherein all the Beaſts of the Foreſt do creep* forth.] And then Darkneſs covering the Face of the Earth, and inviting us to Reſt, gives the Wolves and other wild Beaſts of the Foreſt (ſuch is thy Care, O LORD, of all Creatures) who were afraid to venture Abroad before, Security and Confidence, to come out of their lurking Places, and ſeek their Food.

Ver. 21. *The young Lions roar after their Prey, and ſeek their Meat from* GOD.] Which the ravening young Lions then meet withal; falling upon their Prey with a horrible Noiſe; whereby they expreſs the Eagerneſs of their Hunger; which is not ſo ſharp and devouring, but, by the Divine Providence, it finds full Satisfaction before the Morning.

Ver. 22. *The Sun ariſeth, they gather themſelves together, and lay them down in their Dens.*] When the Sun again appearing, and rouzing us out of our Sleep, they all return with one Conſent, and lay themſelves down in their ſeveral Dens.

Ver. 23. *Man goeth forth to his Work, and to his Labour until the Evening.*] And ſo Man, refreſhed by the Night's Repoſe, goes forth, without any Danger, about his Buſineſs in the Fields: and continues his Labours till the Night call him to Reſt again.

Ver. 24. O LORD! *how manifold are thy Works! in Wiſdom haſt thou made them all: the Earth is full of thy Riches.*] O Eternal LORD! how many and how great are thy Works? and with what admirable Wiſdom haſt thou contrived them all? If we look no farther than this Earth, what aſtoniſhing Variety of good Things do we behold, wherewith thy Bounty hath inriched it?

Ver. 25. So is *this great and wide Sea, wherein* are *Things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great Beaſts.*] And this great and ſpacious Sea alſo, which ſeems to embrace the Earth in its Arms, is no leſs full of thy wonderful Works: For there ſwim Fiſh without Number; ſome of which aſtoniſh us, as much with the Art thou haſt ſhewn in their ſmall Bodies, as others do with the prodigious Greatneſs of their Bulk.

Ver. 26. *There go the Ships*; there is *that Leviathan,* whom *thou haſt made to play therein.*] There the Ships ſail as ſwiftly, as the Fiſhes ſwim; fetching us the Riches both of Sea and Land: and there that great Leviathan (in forming whom thou haſt ſhewn thy mighty Power) finds Room enough to tumble up and down; and ſport himſelf, in his abſolute Dominion over all that the Sea contains.

Ver. 27. *Theſe wait all upon thee: that thou mayeſt give* them *their Meat in due Seaſon.*] O how liberal is thy Goodneſs, which provides convenient Suſtenance for ſuch a vaſt World of Creatures? Every one of which, though they know not their Benefactor, is duly and ſeaſonably ſupplied, with the Food they ſeek, by the Care thou takeſt of them.

Ver. 28. That *thou giveſt them, they gather: thou openeſt thine Hand, they are filled with Good.*] For they only gather what thou, with-

out any Care of theirs, diſpenſeſt to them: And thou art not ſparing of thy Bleſſings; but haſt made a moſt plentiful Proviſion, which thou ſcattereſt every where for them.

Ver. 29. *Thou hideſt thy Face, they are troubled; thou takeſt away their Breath, they die, and return to their Duſt.*] If it fail at any Time, by the Suſpenſe of thy heavenly Influences, all Things look moſt ruefully: they grow weak, nay, die; and are diſſolved into the Elements out of which they were made.

Ver. 30. *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou reneweſt the Face of the Earth.*] But then thou ſendeſt forth again thy quickning Power; whereby new ones are produced, in the Room of thoſe that are dead: juſt as the Earth, after a ſharp Winter hath made it bare, looks freſh and green again at the Return of the Spring.

Ver. 31. *The Glory of the* LORD *ſhall endure for ever: the* LORD *ſhall rejoice in his Works.*] Thus the World is ſtill as full as ever it was; and all future Ages ſhall praiſe, as well as we, the ſame Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of the LORD: which appears ſo gloriouſly in all his Works, that he himſelf is ſtill pleaſed, and delighted in the Continuance of them; as he was at firſt in their Contrivance, *Gen.* I. 31.

Ver. 32. *He looketh on the Earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the Hills, and they ſmoke.*] Elſe they would all ſoon vaniſh, and come to nothing: for at his Preſence the very Earth trembles; and the Mountains, as our Fathers ſaw at Mount *Sinai*, are full of Fire and Smoke.

Ver. 33. *I will ſing unto the* LORD *as long as I live: I will ſing Praiſe unto my* GOD, *while I have my Being.*] I will never ceaſe therefore to ſing the Praiſes of the LORD; who, as he created, ſo ſupports and maintains the whole Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, and all the Creatures contained in them: And I will never forget his particular Kindneſs to me, among the reſt; but acknowledge to my very laſt Breath, the innumerable Benefits I have received from his Bounty.

Ver. 34. *My Meditation of him ſhall be ſweet: I will be glad in the* LORD.] With ſuch Affection will I praiſe him, that all my thankful Meditations and Diſcourſes ſhall be, I hope, no leſs pleaſing to him, than they ſhall be to myſelf: who will take the higheſt Satisfaction, in thinking and ſpeaking of the Goodneſs of the LORD; from whom I ſhall ſtill receive more abundant Cauſe to rejoice in him.

Ver. 35. *Let the Sinners be conſumed out of the Earth, and let the Wicked be no more: bleſs thou the* LORD, *O my Soul. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] But as for them, whoſe only Pleaſure it is to ſatisfie their brutiſh Luſts, and abuſe the many good Things they enjoy, (either denying, or never acknowledging him who is the Donor of them) they ſhall utterly periſh; and be no longer the Care of that Providence, to which they are ſo ungrateful; O my Soul, never imitate their Impiety, or Negligence; but be excited thereby to the greater Diligence, in praiſing thy great Creator and Benefactor. And let all thoſe, who have any Senſe of him, ſtir up themſelves, and join with me in his Praiſes.

PSALM CV.

ARGUMENT.

Though this Pſalm have no Title, yet we are aſſured by what we read in 1 Chron. *XVI.* 8, *&c. that the firſt Part of it at leaſt (to the End of Ver.* 15.) *was made by* David; *and delivered by him to* Aſaph *and his Brethren, for the conſtant Service of* GOD *in the Tabernacle: when after ſeveral Victories over the* Philiſtines (1 *Chron.* XIV.) *he had ſettled the Ark of* GOD *in* Sion. *And it is moſt probable that he afterward inlarged this Pſalm (for who elſe would adventure to do it?) that it might be a more compleat Commemoration of all the Mercies of* GOD, *towards their Nation; from the Days of* Abraham, *to their taking Poſſeſſion of the Land of* Canaan. *Into which he ſhews, their gracious* LORD *conducted them by ſo many miraculous Providences, in ſeveral Ages, (according to his faithful Promiſe made to* Abraham *his faithful Servant) that it deſerved their moſt hearty Acknowledgments: to which he excites them, by* ten *ſeveral Expreſſions, in the* five *firſt Verſes of the Pſalm.*

To which the Greeks *prefix an* Hallelujah, *(for they take the laſt Word of the foregoing Pſalm, and ſet it on the Head of this) as a Note how much they were obliged to* praiſe the LORD, *according to that Exhortation; when they remembred in this Pſalm, the Benefits that he had beſtowed upon their Forefathers: which were ſufficient to excite and whet their Minds, to the Imitation of their Vertue.*

And it may ſerve to admoniſh the new People of GOD, *(as* Theodoret *ſpeaks) that is, as Chriſtians, how much we ought to rejoice in* GOD's *Goodneſs to us; and how dangerous it is to be ungrateful to him: which provoked him to deprive the* Jews *of that fatherly Care which he had taken of their Anceſtors.*

Ver. 1. O *Give Thanks unto the* LORD; *call upon his Name; make known his Deeds among the People.*] Stir up your ſelves, all ye that are here aſſembled, to make your moſt grateful Acknowledgments unto the great LORD; who is pleaſed to come and dwell among you: never approach his Preſence to make your Petitions to him, but join his Praiſes together with them; and proclaim to all the People round about, what great Things he hath done for you, and for your Forefathers.

Ver. 2. *Sing unto him, ſing Pſalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous Works.*] Sing his Praiſe with a chearful Voice, and with all the Inſtruments of Muſick: and let the Subject of your Hymns, and of your ordinary Diſcourſe, be his many marvellous Acts, of which let not one be forgotten.

Ver. 3. *Glory ye in his holy Name: let the Heart of them rejoice that ſeek the* LORD.] For nothing can be ſo great an Honour to you,

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as that you are the Servants of ſuch a mighty LORD; who infinitely tranſcends all other Beings: Triumph therefore, and make your Boaſt of this, as a greater Happineſs than all worldly Goods; let it fill the Hearts of all his faithful Worſhippers with the higheſt Joy and Gladneſs.

Ver. 4. *Seek the* LORD *and his Strength: ſeek his Face evermore.*] Let it incourage them to addreſs themſelves unto him, upon all Occaſions; and, proſtrating themſelves before the Ark of his Preſence, (2 *Chron.* VI. 41.) commend themſelves to his powerful Protection: let them unweariedly ſeek his Favour, and implore his gracious Aſſiſtance.

Ver. 5. *Remember his marvellous Works that he hath done, his Wonders, and the Judgments of his Mouth.*] Which you may with the greater Confidence expect, if you call to mind, and thankfully commemorate the marvellous Things he hath done for your Deliverance; and his terrible Executions, (*Exod.* III. 20.) according to his juſt Sentence paſſed (*Exod.* VII. 4.) upon your Enemies.

Ver. 6. *O ye Seed of Abraham his Servant, ye Children of Jacob his choſen.*] The Benefit of which you ſtill enjoy, O ye who are the Poſterity of his Servant *Abraham*; (whoſe Faith and Obedience you ought to imitate) the Children of *Jacob*, whom he choſe (rejecting *Eſau*) to inherit the promiſed Bleſſing.

Ver. 7. *He is the* LORD *our* GOD, *his Judgments are in all the Earth.*] He is ſtill the ſame mighty LORD, and our moſt gracious GOD; who continues to execute his Judgments every where upon our Enemies, (2 *Sam.* V. 7, 10, 17, *&c.*) and therefore let us never ceaſe to praiſe him, and chearfully ſerve him, and faithfully depend upon him.

Ver. 8. *He hath remembred his Covenant for ever, the Word which he commanded to a thouſand Generations.*] For he is never unmindful of his Ingagements to us; but punctually performs in all Ages, what he hath promiſed in his Covenant.

Ver. 9. *Which* Covenant *he made with Abraham, and his Oath unto Iſaac:*] Which he firſt ſolemnly made, (*Gen.* XV. 17, 18.) and then ſware (XXII. 16.) unto *Abraham:* and renewed with his Son *Iſaac*; to whom he promiſed to perform that Oath, which he ſware unto *Abraham*, *Gen.* XXVI. 3.

Ver. 10. *And confirmed the ſame unto Jacob for a Law, and to Iſrael for an everlaſting Covenant:*] And again confirmed it to *Jacob*, both when he went to *Haran*, (*Gen.* XXVIII. 13, *&c.*) and at his Return, when he changed his Name into *Iſrael*, (*Gen.* XXXV. 10, *&c.*) and at laſt paſſed it into a Law, in that Covenant which he made with their Poſterity, (*Exod.* XXIII. 22, 23, 31, 32.) never to be altered, if they keep their Covenant with him.

Ver. 11. *Saying, Unto thee will I give the Land of Canaan, the Lot of your Inheritance.*] The Sum of which was this; I beſtow upon thee, and will bring thee into that good Land, the Land of *Canaan:* which, according to this faithful Covenant, you now poſſeſs; as by Lot it was diſtributed to your ſeveral Tribes, for their Inheritance, *Joſh.* XIV. 1, 2.

Ver. 12. *When they were* but *a few Men in Number: yea, very few, and Strangers in it.*] This Covenant he began to make with your Foreſathers, (and ſhewed his Intention to perform it, by his ſingular Care over them) when their Family was very ſmall, (*Gen.* XII. 1, 5.) and conſequently ſo weak, that they might eaſily have been deſtroyed in the Land, where they were Strangers, (*Gen.* XXIII. 4.) had no Friends nor Allies to ſupport them:

Ver. 13. *When they went from one Nation to another, from* one *Kingdom to another People.*] Nor any ſettled Habitation; but were forced to wander to and fro, from one Part of *Canaan* into another, (*Gen.* XII. 6, 8, 9.) and then to ſojourn in other Kingdoms; ſometimes in *Egypt*, (*Gen.* XII. 10.) ſometimes in *Gerar*, (*Gen.* XX. 1. XXVI. 1.) and ſometimes in the Eaſtern Country from whence they came, *Gen.* XXIX. 1.

Ver. 14. *He ſuffered no Man to do them Wrong: yea, he reproved Kings for their Sakes:*] And whereſoever they ſojourned, he took them into his Protection, and ſuffered no Man to do them any Injury, (*Gen.* XXXI. 24, 42.) but gave ſevere Checks, even to the King of *Egypt*, (*Gen.* XII. 16.) and the King of *Gerar*, (XX. 3, *&c.*) to prevent the Miſchief which they were deſigning to them.

Ver. 15. Saying, *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no Harm.*] For he told them, theſe were ſacred Perſons, whom he deſigned to make greater Men than themſelves: and therefore charged them not to hurt them; but to honour them, not merely as *Princes*, (*Gen.* XXIII. 6.) but as *Prophets*, (XX. 7.) by whoſe Prayers they ſhould receive great Bleſſings, if they were kind to them.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, he called for a Famine upon the Land: he brake the whole Staff of Bread.*] And when, in the Days of *Jacob*, he puniſhed the Land of *Canaan*, as well as other Countries, with ſuch a Dearth, (*Gen.* XLI. 54, *&c.*) that the Earth brought forth no Kind of Grain, for the Support of humane Life;

Ver. 17. *He ſent a Man before them, even Joſeph, who was ſold for a Servant.*] He took a ſpecial Care, in a moſt wonderful Way, to provide both for him and for his Family: for *Joſeph* (whom his Brethren firſt conſpired to deſtroy, but afterward were diverted from their Purpoſe, and only ſold for a Slave) was brought into *Egypt*, by the ſecret Counſel of GOD, (*Gen.* XLV. 5, 7, &c.) to be the Inſtrument of their Preſervation.

Ver. 18. *Whoſe Feet they hurt with Fetters; he was laid in Iron.*] He was oppreſſed indeed, for a long Time, by a moſt grievous Calumny: which was a ſorer Affliction to him, than the Chains and Fetters, that were, at firſt, laid upon him in Priſon.

Ver. 19. *Until the Time that his Word came: the Word of the* LORD *tried him.*] Till Mention at laſt was made of him to *Pharaoh*, by one of his Officers: who related how exactly *Joſeph* predicted what had befaln him, and another of his Fellow-ſervants; as if he were a Man inſpired, *Gen.* XL. 21, 22. XLI. 12, 13.

Ver. 20. *The King ſent and looſed him:* even

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the Ruler of the People, and let him go free.] Whereupon the King preſently ſent for him, (*Gen.* XLI. 14.) that great Prince, whoſe Dominion extended over many Provinces, and commanded him to be ſet at Liberty.

Ver. 21. *He made him Lord of his Houſe, and Ruler of all his Subſtance.*] And received ſuch Satisfaction from him about his Dream, which none of his wiſe Men could interpret; that he not only wholly diſcharged him from his Impriſonment, but made him the chief Officer in the Court: and, under himſelf, the ſupreme Governour of his whole Kingdom, *Gen.* XLI. 40, 41.

Ver. 22. *To bind his Princes at his Pleaſure: and teach his Senators Wiſdom.*] Yea, intruſted him with an abſolute Power, to command all the Rulers of his ſeveral Provinces, what he pleaſed; and to puniſh their Diſobedience according to his Diſcretion: The moſt ancient and wiſeſt Counſellors in the Realm, were ordered to repair to him; and to do nothing without his Inſtructions, *Gen.* XLI. 44.

Ver. 23. *Iſrael alſo came into Egypt: and Jacob ſojourned in the Land of Ham.*] By which great Authority he procured not only the Leave, but the Invitation of *Pharaoh*, (*Gen.* XLV. 16, 17, &c.) to his Father, to come and bring all his Family with him into *Egypt:* and accordingly he came and dwelt in the beſt Part of all the Countrey, *Gen.* XLVI. 26, 28.

Ver. 24. *And he encreaſed his People greatly: and made them ſtronger than their Enemies.*] Where, according to his Promiſe, when he had *Jacob* accept that Invitation, (*Gen.* XLVI. 3, 4.) the LORD multiplied them exceedingly, (*Exod.* I. 7.) and made them mightier than the *Egyptians*, (*Exod.* I. 9.) who, of Friends, were now become their Enemies.

Ver. 25. *He turned their Heart to hate his People, to deal ſubtilly with his Servants.*] For the kinder GOD was to the *Iſraelites*, and the more he encreaſed their Numbers, the greater Jealouſie it begat in the Heart of the *Egyptians*; which turned at laſt into an abſolute Hatred of them: and provoked their Malice to invent the cruelleſt Ways, firſt to diminiſh, (*Exod.* I. 10, 11, &c.) and then to deſtroy them, (Ver. 15, 16.)

Ver. 26. *He ſent Moſes his Servant, and Aaron whom he had choſen.*] This moved the Divine Compaſſion, when he ſaw their Oppreſſion grew intolerable, to give Commiſſion to *Moſes*, whom he had in an extraordinary Manner preſerved from periſhing, (*Exod.* III. 10.) and to *Aaron*, whom he choſe to be his Aſſiſtant, (*Exod.* IV. 15.) to go and demand their Liberty of *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* IV. 23. V. 1.

Ver. 27. *They ſhewed his Signs among them, and Wonders in the Land of Ham.*] And he diſputing their Commiſſion, (and refuſing to let *Iſrael* go) they proved it, and perſuaded him to obey it, by many miraculous Works: which GOD commanded them to do, as Tokens that he had ſent them.

Ver. 28. *He ſent Darkneſs, and made it dark: and they rebelled not againſt his Word.*] Among which the pitchy Darkneſs, which overſpread the whole Land three Days (except only where the *Iſraelites* dwelt) was a very remarkable Puniſhment of *Pharaoh*'s Blindneſs: who would not ſee the Hand of GOD in all thoſe other Plagues, which *Moſes* and *Aaron*, not fearing his Diſpleaſure, but purſuing their Orders, had inflicted on him.

Ver. 29. *He turned their Waters into Blood, and ſlew their Fiſh.*] As firſt of all, the LORD commanded them to ſtretch their Hand upon all the Waters of *Egypt*; which he turned into Blood: and made them ſo putrid, that the Fiſh which was in the River died, *Exod.* VII. 20, 21.

Ver. 30. *Their Land brought forth Frogs in Abundance, in the Chambers of their Kings.*] And, at the next Stroke, produced ſuch a vaſt Number of Frogs out of the ſtinking Waters and Mud; that not only the whole Earth was covered with them, but no Houſe, no Room in their Houſes; no, not the Cabinets of their King and his Princes, were free from their Annoyance, *Exod.* VIII. 3, 6.

Ver. 31. *He ſpake, and there came divers Sorts of Flies*, and *Lice in all their Coaſts.*] And then followed an infinite Swarm of the moſt peſtilent Sort of Flies, (ſee *Pſal.* LXXVIII. 45.) after a troubleſome and filthy Plague of Lice, which had infeſted all the Country, *Exod.* VIII. 17, 24.

Ver. 32. *He gave them Hail for Rain*, and *flaming Fire in their Land.*] Which was ſucceeded (after a Murrain upon their Cattle, and a fiery Ulcer on their own Bodies) by a dreadful Storm of Hail, (when fruitful Showers of Rain were moſt deſirable) together with ſuch Lightning, as was never ſeen: for it ran upon the Ground, and burnt up all that was not deſtroyed by the Hail, *Exod.* IX. 23, 24, &c.

Ver. 33. *He ſmote their Vines alſo, and their Fig-trees: and brake the Trees of their Coaſts.*] Which not only ſtruck down the Grapes and the Figs: but ſhattered the Vines and Fig-trees themſelves; together with many other Fruit-trees in the Land.

Ver. 34. *He ſpake, and the Locuſts came: and Caterpillars, and that without Number.*] And whatſoever eſcaped this tempeſtuous Storm, (for ſome Things were not then grown up, *Exod.* IX. 31.) was not long after devoured by an innumerable Army of various Sorts of Locuſts, *Exod.* X. 5, 12, &c.

Ver. 35. *And did eat up all the Herbs in their Land: and devoured the Fruit of their Ground.*] Which, by his Command, came and covered the whole Face of the Country, eating up the very Leaves of the Trees, as well as all the Graſs and Herbs upon the Ground, *Exod.* X. 15.

Ver. 36. *He ſmote alſo all the Firſt-born in their Land: the Chief of all their Strength.*] And at laſt he finiſhed theſe Plagues in the Slaughter of all the Firſt-born, both of Man and Beaſt: the Angel of the LORD killing, in one and the ſame Night, (*Exod.* XII. 29.) the principal Prop of every Family: and the beſt of all their Flocks and their Herds.

Ver. 37. *He brought them forth alſo with Silver and Gold: and* there was *not one feeble*

Perſon

Perſon *among their Tribes.*] Which terrible Deſtruction ſo affrighted them, that they not only let *Iſrael* go, but were forward to thruſt them out of *Egypt*, and that loaded with Silver and Gold, (*Exod.* XII. 31, 35.) And which is very wonderful, among ſo many thouſand Perſons, (Ver. 37.) there was not one, at that Time, ſo feeble, as to be unable to travel.

Ver. 38. *Egypt was glad when they departed: for the Fear of them fell upon them.*] And great was the Joy at their Departure; not only among the *Iſraelites*, but among the *Egyptians*: who thought themſelves not ſafe till the *Iſraelites* had their Liberty; but were in Dread of another Plague, which they thought might kill them, as the former had done their Children, *Exod.* XII. 33.

Ver. 39. *He ſpread a Cloud for a Covering: and Fire to give Light in the Night.*] Nor did the Divine Providence deſert our Fathers after it had brought them out of *Egypt*; but leſt they ſhould ſuffer any Prejudice by the exceeding great Heats, or miſtake their Way in a deſolate Wilderneſs; he defended them in the Day from the ſcorching Rays of the Sun by a Cloud: which it ſelf gave them Light to comfort, and (if Need were) to guide them in the Night, *Exod.* XIII. 21, 22.

Ver. 40. The People *asked, and he brought Quails: and ſatisfied them with the Bread of Heaven.*] He provided alſo a delicate Food, for that vaſt Multitude; even when they were ſo ungrateful as to murmur againſt him: (*Exod.* XVI. 12, *&c.*) ſending them, in the Evening, ſuch Flights of Quails, and in the Morning, ſuch Showers of Corn out of the Clouds; as abundantly ſatisfied every one of them.

Ver. 41. *He opened the Rock, and the Waters guſhed out: they ran in the dry Places* like *a River.*] And when they murmured again for Want of Drink, (*Exod.* XVII. 2, 6.) he was ſo kind as to ſtop their Complaints, by making Water to ſpring out of a Rock: from whence it guſh'd ſo conſtantly, and in ſuch Abundance, that it made a Stream; which followed them in all the parch'd Grounds through which they marched.

Ver. 42. *For he remembred his holy Promiſe,* and *Abraham his Servant.*] For the LORD was reſolved punctually to perform his Promiſe, paſſed in former Ages, (*Gen.* XV. 18. *Exod.* II. 24.) which made him reward the Fidelity of his Servant *Abraham*; even upon his incredulous Poſterity; at that very Time which he had prefixed for it, *Gen.* XV. 13. *Exod.* XII. 41.

Ver. 43. *And he brought forth his People with Joy,* and *his Choſen with Gladneſs.*] When, with much Mirth and Joy, he brought his People out of the *Egyptian* Bondage; and made them ſhout to ſee the Difference he made between them and the *Egyptians*; who were drowned in the Red Sea; while they were conducted ſafe through it on dry Land, *Exod.* XV. 1, 13, 19.

Ver. 44. *And gave them the Lands of the Heathen: and they inherited the Labour of the People.*] And, in Concluſion, he caſt out ſeven Nations, to make Room for them in the Land of *Canaan*: where their Poſterity took Poſſeſſion of Cities and Towns, Fields and Vineyards; which the Labour of others had built and planted for them, *Deut.* VI. 10, 11. *Joſh.* XXIV. 13.

Ver. 45. *That they might obſerve his Statutes, and keep his Laws. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] That they might have the more Leiſure to purge the Country of all its antient Superſtition and Filthineſs: and ſet themſelves heartily to worſhip GOD, after that Manner that he preſcribed; in a ſtrict Obſervance of all the reſt of his holy Laws.

For which, and all other his Benefits, excite your ſelves to praiſe the LORD.

PSALM CVI.

Hallelujah, *i. e. Praiſe the* LORD.

ARGUMENT.

There is little Doubt to be made, but this is the Title of the Pſalm, as it is of many other, (CXI, *&c.*) *whereby the Author excites them to acknowledge* GOD'S *Bounty to their ungrateful Forefathers. For as in the foregoing Pſalm (they are the Words of* Theodoret) *the Divine Benefits are commemorated; ſo in this the Pſalmiſt both commemorates them, and alſo upbraids the Ingratitude of thoſe that received them. Which magnified the Mercies of* GOD *the more; in being ſo very kind to thoſe wicked People, that when he puniſhed them, he did not utterly deſtroy them.*

The Opinion of that Father is, that the Pſalm was compoſed in the Perſon of the more pious Sort of People; who bewail the common Calamities, and implore the Divine Indulgence. And moſt Interpreters that I have met withal, imagine it to have been made in the Time of the Captivity of Babylon: *but the Proof of it is very weak. For the laſt Verſe but one, upon which they ground that Conjecture, may have another Conſtruction, and mean no more but this; that* GOD *would be pleaſed, when the Nation, or any Part of it, ſhould be carried Captive, to take Pity upon them; and reſtore them again to their Countrey. Or rather, in my Opinion, it refers to thoſe, who, in the Days of* Saul, *or before, were taken Priſoners by the* Philiſtines, *and other Nations: whom* David *prays* GOD *to gather to their own Land again, that they might worſhip him in that Place, which he had prepared for the Ark of his Preſence. For it ſeems plain enough that this was one of the Pſalms, which he delivered then to* Aſaph: *the* firſt *Verſe and the* two laſt *being ſet down in the* 1 Chron. *XVI.* 36, 37. *as the Beginning and Ending of another Pſalm, (which can be none but this) which he then gave in with the other two there mentioned,* (XCVI. *and* CV.) *to praiſe the* LORD *withal.*

Ver. 1. PRAISE *ye the* LORD, *O give Thanks unto the* LORD, *for* he is *good, for his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] O make your thankful Acknowledgments to the great LORD of all the World; who was exceeding gra-

cious to your Forefathers, and will continue his Kindneſs, you may hope, unto all ſucceeding Ages.

Ver. 2. *Who can utter the mighty Acts of the* LORD? who *can ſhew forth all his Praiſe?*] Praiſe him with all your Might; for when you have done your beſt, you muſt acknowledge that it is impoſſible to expreſs your Obligations to his omnipotent Goodneſs. For who is able to tell how miraculous that Power was, which wrought ſuch Wonders for us in *Egypt*; and in the Wilderneſs, and in the Land of *Canaan?* where ſhall we find a Man that can ſet forth, as they deſerve, all the Praiſe-worthy Acts of the LORD?

Ver. 3. *Bleſſed* are *they that keep Judgment: and he that doth Righteouſneſs at all Times.*] Which are ſo great and many, that they are moſt happy Men, who by faithful Obedience to all his Precepts, (not only when they have newly received his Benefits, but throughout the whole Courſe of their Lives) preſerve themſelves in the Favour of ſo gracious a Lord and Maſter (which our Forefathers fooliſhly loſt, by revolting preſently from their merciful Deliverer.)

Ver. 4. *Remember me, O* LORD, *with the Favour* that thou beareſt unto *thy People: O viſit me with thy Salvation:*] Make me, good LORD, one of this happy Number; and let me partake of the Favour thou ſtill deſigneſt for thy People; and find thee ready at Hand, in all Dangers, to preſerve and deliver me, (1 *Chron.* XVIII. 6, 13, 14.)

Ver. 5. *That I may ſee the Good of thy choſen, that I may rejoice in the Gladneſs of thy Nation: that I may glory with thine Inheritance.*] That I may live to ſee thy choſen People *Iſrael* ſettled in a peaceable Enjoyment of all thy Bleſſings, (1 *Chron.* XXII. 18.) and have my Share in their Joy and Felicity, (1 *Chron.* XXIX. 9.) nay, triumph together with them, in the higheſt Praiſes of thy Bounty towards thy own Nation, and peculiar Inheritance, 1 *Chron.* XXIX. 10, 11, 12, 13, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *We have ſinned with our Fathers: we have committed Iniquity, we have done wickedly.*] Our Sins indeed may hinder theſe Bleſſings from us; for we are no better than our Forefathers, but have offended after their Example, by which we ought to have been amended: we are guilty of many Iniquities againſt one another, and much Impiety againſt thee.

Ver. 7. *Our Fathers underſtood not thy Wonders in Egypt, they remembred not the Multitude of thy Mercies, but provoked* him *at the Sea*, even *at the Red Sea.*] We are the wicked Off-ſpring of thoſe who were ſo ſtupid, as not to be affected with the prodigious Works thou didſt in *Egypt*; or preſently to forget that long Series of miraculous Preſervations and Deliverances, by which they were brought from thence: But in the very next Strait into which they fell (at the Borders of the Sea, that remarkable Place the Red Sea) diſtruſted his Power; and wiſh'd he had left them in that cruel Servitude, of which before they ſo heavily complained, *Exod.* XIV.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheleſs he ſaved them for his Names Sake: that he might make his mighty Power to be known.*] And yet (ſuch was his ſtupendious Goodneſs) he would not let them periſh in their Ingratitude; but, to preſerve the Name he had gotten of their mighty Saviour, gave them a new Deliverance: that the World might not imagine he wanted Power to complete what he had begun to do for them.

Ver. 9. *He rebuked the Red Sea alſo, and it was dried up: ſo he led them through the Depths as through the Wilderneſs.*] On this Conſideration, he check'd the Courſe of that Sea by ſo ſtrong a Wind, that he made a Path in the midſt of it: and let them through thoſe Depths on as hard and dry Ground, as they trod upon in their March through the parched Deſarts, *Exod.* XIV. 21, 22.

Ver. 10. *And he ſaved them from the Hand of him that hated* them: *and redeemed them from the Hand of the Enemy.*] By which Means he ſaved them from *Pharaoh*'s Army; which preſſed hard upon their Backs, as the Sea was before their Face (*Exod.* XIV. 9, 10.) He reſcued them from the Power of thoſe implacable Enemies, whoſe Hatred carried them to purſue them eagerly even into the Sea, (*Exod.* XIV. 23.)

Ver. 11. *And the Waters covered their Enemies: there was not one of them left.*] Where they were drowned every Man of them; the Sea, which had ſtood fixed as a Wall to ſave the *Iſraelites*, returning back with a mighty Violence to overwhelm their Adverſaries.

Ver. 12. *Then believed they his Words, they ſang his Praiſe.*] Which was ſo evident a Token of his Power and Goodneſs, that they were perſuaded by it, at that preſent, to believe GOD's Promiſes, (*Exod.* XIV. 31.) and to ſing a Song of Praiſe to him, for this miraculous Deliverance, *Exod.* XV. 1, *&c.*

Ver. 13. *They ſoon forgat his Works, they waited not for his Counſel:*] But within three Days they grew impatient again, (*Exod.* XV. 22, 24.) and forgetting the great and many Pledges they had received of his Divine Power, quarrelled with his Servants; and would not expect till he ſhewed what Way he intended to relieve them.

Ver. 14. *But luſted exceedingly in the Wilderneſs, and tempted* GOD *in the Deſart.*] But not long after this, murmured again; (*Exod.* XVI.) And though, inſtead of puniſhing them for it, he ſatisfied them with Bread from Heaven, and gave them ſeveral other Demonſtrations of his Divine Preſence among them in the Wilderneſs, (*Exod.* XVI, XX, XXIV, *&c.*) yet, to pleaſe their wanton Appetite, they mutinied another Time, and cried out vehemently for Fleſh to eat, (*Numb.* XI. 4, 5, *&c.*) and deſired new Proofs of his Power to ſupply them.

Ver. 15. *And he gave them their Requeſt, but ſent Leanneſs into their Soul.*] Which he was pleaſed to grant in ſuch Abundance, that they ſurfeited of the Quails which he ſent them: and, inſtead of being nouriſhed, fell into a grievous Diſeaſe, whereby great Numbers of them were waſted and conſumed, *Num.* XI. 31, 32, *&c.*

Ver. 16. *They envied Moſes alſo in the Camp, and Aaron the Saint of the* LORD.]- And they that eſcaped, were not cured of their rebellious Humour; but ſeditiouſly diſputed the Authority

of

of *Moſes*: And accuſed both him and *Aaron*, whom the LORD had conſecrated for the Service of his Altar, as ambitious Men, that took too much upon them, *Numb.* XVI. 3.

Ver. 17. *The Earth opened and ſwallowed up Dathan, and covered the Company of Abiram.*] Which moved the divine Juſtice to puniſh their Preſumption with a moſt terrible Vengeance: for the Earth opened, and buried alive both *Dathan* and *Abiram*, and the Faction that adhered to them, *Numb.* XVI. 32, 33.

Ver. 18. *And a Fire was kindled in their Company; the Flame burnt up the Wicked.*] And the other Company raiſed by *Korah*, were ſmitten with Lightning from Heaven; which burnt up thoſe impious Men, who were ſo bold as to invade the Office of the Prieſts of the LORD, *Numb.* XVI. 35.

Ver. 19. *They made a Calf in Horeb, and worſhipped the molten Image.*] Whoſe Anger they began very early to incenſe; for even at that very Place where the LORD had newly appeared to them, in aſtoniſhing Thunder, and Lightning, and Clouds, (*Exod.* XX. 18.) and had ſpoken to them with an audible Voice, and at the ſecond Word he ſpake had charged them not to make any graven Image (*Exod.* XX. 4.) and had called *Moſes* up into the Mount to receive the reſt of his Laws (which he had begun in a moſt dreadful manner to deliver to them) they ſtupidly made a golden Calf, and proſtrated themſelves before the Work of their own Hands.

Ver. 20. *Thus they changed their Glory into the Similitude of an Ox that eateth Graſs.*] Slighting that glorious Preſence of the Majeſty of GOD, (*Exod.* XXIV. 16, 17.) which, appearing in the Cloud, had done many Wonders for them: and chuſing rather to commend themſelves to the Protection of an Image, in which they ſaw no Glory; the Image of a dull Ox, a Creature without Reaſon, a Servant of Man, that is ſupported it ſelf by ſo weak a Thing as Hay, *Exod.* XXXII. 14.

Ver. 21. *They forgat* GOD *their Saviour, which had done great Things in Egypt:*] The Root of which ſottiſh Apoſtacy was, that they did not keep in Mind what Deliverances GOD had granted them under the Conduct of *Moſes*; whom now they deſpiſed: (*Exod.* XXXII. 1.) But forgat his great Works in the Land of *Egypt*, where they never ſaw any Similitude of him.

Ver. 22. *Wondrous Works in the Land of Ham*, and *terrible Things by the Red Sea.*] Miraculous Works, which filled the whole Country with Wonder and Aſtoniſhment; and concluded at laſt in the fearful Overthrow of *Pharaoh* and all his Hoſt in the Red Sea, through which they paſſed ſafely.

Ver. 23. *Therefore he ſaid that he would deſtroy them, had not Moſes his choſen ſtood before him in the Breach: to turn away his Wrath, leſt he ſhould deſtroy* them.] Which provoked the Divine Diſpleaſure ſo highly, that he reſolved to deſtroy them, (*Exod.* XXXII. 9, 10.) and had done it, if *Moſes*, for whom he had a great Reſpect, had not, by his earneſt Interceſſion, made up this Breach; and reconciled him ſo far to them, that he did not proceed then to take ſuch Vengeance on them, *Exod.* XXXII. 11, 12, 14, 15.

Ver. 24. *Yea, they deſpiſed the pleaſant Land: they believed not his Word:*] But when after this they deſpiſed (*Numb.* XIII. 32.) that goodly Country, to the Borders of which he had brought them, (*Deut.* I. 19, 20.) which the Spies themſelves confeſſed was rich and deſirable: (*Numb.* XIII. 27. XIV. 32.) and would not believe that GOD intended, or was able to perform his Promiſe to them, *Numb.* XIII. 37.

Ver. 25. *But murmured in their Tents*, and *hearkened not unto the Voice of the* LORD.] But murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron* in their Tents, as if they had deluded them, (*Numb.* XIV. 1, 2, *&c.*) refuſing to march, when the LORD commanded them to go up, and take Poſſeſſion of it, *Deut.* I. 21, 26, 32.

Ver. 26. *Therefore he lifted up his Hand againſt them, to overthrow them in the Wilderneſs.*] Then he ſolemnly ſware, that not one of that wicked Generation, who had ſo often rebelled againſt him, ſhould ever come there; but all periſh in the Wilderneſs, *Numb.* XIV. 21, 22, 35. *Deut.* I. 34.

Ver. 27. *To overthrow their Seed alſo among the Nations, and to ſcatter them in the Lands.*] And ſome of them be overthrown by the Heathen, whom the LORD would have delivered up into their Hand, (*Numb.* XIV. 45.) and others diſperſed in ſeveral Parts of that Country, which they deſpiſed, *Numb.* XXI. 1.

Ver. 28. *They joined themſelves alſo unto Baal-peor, and ate the Sacrifices of the Dead.*] Nor did they grow much better by theſe dreadful Threatnings and Executions; but not only moſt ſhamefully committed Whoredom with the Daughters of *Moab*, but embraced their Religion: devoting themſelves to the vile Service of *Baal*, whoſe Temple ſtood upon Mount *Peor*; and partaking with them, in the Sacrifices which they offered to dead Men, *Numb.* XXV. 1, 2, 3.

Ver. 29. *Thus they provoked* him *to Anger with their Inventions: and the Plague brake in upon them.*] Which abominable Wickedneſs incenſed the Divine Diſpleaſure to ſuch a Degree; that he commanded the Offenders to be kill'd and hang'd up in the Face of the Sun: and alſo ſent a grievous Plague among the People, *Numb.* XXV. 4, 5, 9.

Ver. 30. *Then ſtood up Phinehas, and executed Judgment: and* ſo *the Plague was ſtayed.*] Which raged in the Camp, till *Phinehas*, in a holy Zeal, went as boldly to puniſh, as others did to commit their Crimes: and thruſt thro' the Body, one of the Princes of the People, whom the Judges feared to meddle withal; and then the Plague ceaſed, *Numb.* XXV. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 31. *And that was counted unto him for Righteouſneſs, unto all Generations for evermore.*] Which ſeaſonable Piece of Juſtice, the LORD not only approved as a praiſe-worthy Act, but rewarded alſo with the Promiſe of the Prieſt-hood: which he intailed upon his Poſterity, throughout all Generations, *Numb.* XXV. 12, 13.

Ver. 32. *They angred* him *alſo at the Waters of Striſe, ſo that it went ill with Moſes for their*

their Sakes:] And, before this, they had been ſo unbelieving and rebellious, as, having had long Experience of GOD's Power and Goodneſs in providing for them, to murmur for want of Water; at that Place, which took its Name from their Quarrel with *Moſes*, (*Numb.* XX. 3, 13.) who ſadly ſuffered upon their Account, *Numb.* XX. 12.

Ver. 33. *Becauſe they provoked his Spirit, ſo that he ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips.*] For, being exaſperated by their frequent Mutinies, he let fall ſome paſſionate Words; which expreſſed ſuch Diſtruſt and Impatience, as did not become ſo great a Miniſter of GOD, (*Numb.* XX. 12.) who thereupon reſolved, he ſhould not have the Honour to accompliſh his Promiſe, of bringing them to their Reſt, *Numb.* XXVII. 24. *Deut.* I. 37.

Ver. 34. *They did not deſtroy the Nations, concerning whom the* LORD *commanded them.*] In which, being ſettled, they did not deſtroy thoſe *ſeven* Nations, (*Judg.* I. 21, 27, 29, &c.) whoſe Abominations were ſo foul; that the LORD gave them a ſtrict Charge, not to ſuffer them to live there any longer, *Exod.* XXIII. 30, 33. *Deut.* VII. 2.

Ver. 35. *But were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their Works.*] But, quite contrary, they not only let them live, but, againſt GOD's expreſs Commandment, (*Joſh.* XXIII. 7, 12.) entred into Familiarity, and made a Covenant and League with them, (*Judg.* II. 1, 2.) and ſo at laſt learnt to do as they did, and imitated their evil Manners.

Ver. 36. *And they ſerved their Idols: which were a Snare unto them.*] For they forſook the LORD, who had brought them thither; and worſhipped the Gods of thoſe People whom they had conquered, (*Judg.* II. 11, 12. III. 5, 6.) which proved their utter Ruin and Deſtruction, *Deut.* VII. 16, 26. *Judg.* II. 3.

Ver. 37. *Yea, they ſacrificed their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils,*] For they were ſo beſotted with their Idolatry, as to imitate their moſt barbarous Rites: ſacrificing to infernal Spirits, not only their Beaſts, but (as the Cuſtom of that Country was, *Deut.* XII. 30, 31.) their Sons and their Daughters:

Ver. 38. *And ſhed innocent Blood,* even *the Blood of their Sons and of their Daughters, whom they ſacrificed unto the Idols of Canaan: and the Land was polluted with Blood.*] Whom they did not merely conſecrate to the Service of Devils; but offered their Blood, the Blood of innocent Babes, even of their own Sons and Daughters, (as I ſaid) upon the Altars of the Idols of *Canaan:* prophaning thereby the Holy Land, with the moſt impious and unnatural Murthers.

Ver. 39. *Thus were they defiled with their own Works, and went a Whoring with their own Inventions.*] Beſides other abominable Works wherewith they defiled themſelves; ſuch as Whoredom, and all manner of beaſtly Luſts: which were the filthy Vices of thoſe Nations, whom GOD caſt out before them, *Lev.* XVIII. 24, 25, 27, 28, &c.

Ver. 40. *Therefore was the Wrath of the* LORD *kindled againſt his People, inſomuch that he abhorred his own Inheritance.*] And ſo contrary to Nature, as well as his Law, that the LORD was exceeding angry with them, (*Judg.* II. 14, 20.) and the more, becauſe he had made them his People: whom he now abominated as impure and unclean; tho' once they had been very dear unto him.

Ver. 41. *And he gave them into the Hand of the Heathen; and they that hated them, ruled over them.*] And thereupon delivered them up to the Power of thoſe impious Nations, with whom they contracted Friendſhip, when they ſhould have deſtroyed them, (*Judg.* III. 3, 5. IV. 2. XIII. 1.) who retaining ſtill their ancient Hatred, exerciſed a rigorous Tyranny over them, *Judg.* IV. 3.

Ver. 42. *Their Enemies alſo oppreſſed them, and they were brought into Subjection under their Hand.*] And ſo did many other of their neighbouring Enemies, the *Meſopotamians*, and *Moabites*, (*Judg.* III. 8, 12.) the *Midianites* and *Amalekites*, (VI. 2, 3, &c.) and ſuch like, (X. 7, 8.) who not only grievouſly afflicted them; but deſervedly made thoſe their Subjects, nay, Slaves, who would not ſerve their gracious GOD.

Ver. 43. *Many Times did he deliver them, but they provoked* him *with their Counſel, and were brought low for their Iniquity.*] Who ſtill continued ſo kind to them, that upon the firſt Sign of their Repentance, he conſtantly raiſed up the Spirit of ſome great Man or other; to reſcue them from every one of theſe Oppreſſors: tho' they as conſtantly provoked him again, by relapſing to their former Idolatry; which in the Iſſue brought them exceeding low, *Judg.* X. 8, 9.

Ver. 44. *Nevertheleſs, he regarded their Affliction, when he heard their Cry.*] And yet, ſuch was his tender Compaſſion towards them, he did not abſolutely refuſe to help even theſe baſe Revolters, (*Judg.* X. 14, 15, 16.) when, in their Diſtreſs, they made a lamentable Moan, and promiſed Amendment.

Ver. 45. *And he remembred for them his Covenant, and repented according to the Multitude of his Mercies.*] For he was not unmindful of the Covenant he had made with their Forefathers, (*Levit.* XXVI. 42, 44, 45. *Deut.* XXX. 1, 2, 3.) but let them reap the Benefit of it; in ceaſing to puniſh them: and, when they deſerved to be utterly deſtroyed, beſtowing many and exceeding great Bleſſings on them.

Ver. 46. *He made them alſo to be pitied of all thoſe that carried them Captives.*] For he inclined the Hearts, even of thoſe who had ſubdued, and implacably hated them, unto ſome Compaſſion towards them: ſo that they did not endeavour their total Extirpation, *Judg.* XIII. 1. XIV. 2. XV. 9, 10, &c.

Ver. 47. *Save us, O* LORD *our* GOD, *and gather us from among the Heathen, to give Thanks unto thy holy Name,* and *to triumph in thy Praiſe.*] And therefore we humbly hope ſtill in the ſame great Mercies; and beſeech thee, O moſt mighty LORD, who haſt been wont to do our Nation good, to deliver us, how unworthy ſoever, from all our preſent Enemies; and to reſtore ſuch of us as are fallen into their Hands, unto

unto their own Country; that they may join with us in giving Thanks to thy incomparable Goodneſs, and ſetting forth thy Praiſes with the greateſt Joy and Triumph, ſaying;

Ver. 48. *Bleſſed be the* LORD GOD *of Iſrael from everlaſting to everlaſting: and let all the People ſay, Amen. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] Let the great LORD of all the World, who hath been ſo gracious unto *Iſrael*, as to chuſe them for his own peculiar People, be moſt heartily bleſſed and praiſed: Let all Generations bleſs him, as long as the World ſhall laſt, and unto all Eternity: and let all his People concur in theſe Deſires, and wiſh it may be ſo; let them all praiſe the LORD, and deſire he may be ever praiſed.

The End of the Fourth Book of Pſalms.

The Fifth Book of *Pſalms.*

PSALM CVII.

ARGUMENT.

The Fifth *Book of Pſalms (which conſiſts moſt of Praiſes and Thankſgivings) begins here; with an Exhortation to thoſe whom* GOD *(according to the Prayer foregoing,* CVI. 47.*) had delivered from Pagan Servitude, to acknowledge that ſingular Benefit with their hearty Thankſgivings: and thence to take Occaſion to magnifie his merciful Providence over all other Men, not only of that, but of all Nations, when they addreſſed themſelves unto him in their Diſtreſſes. For inſtance, Travellers in the Deſart, who have loſt their Way, Priſoners, Sick People, Mariners, Husbandmen, even whole Countries, the Pſalmiſt ſhews are made ſtrangely proſperous, if they have a Regard to* GOD; *and on the other ſide fall into great Miſery, if they neglect him. It had been endleſs to enumerate all other Caſes; but by theſe any Man may underſtand, if he pleaſe (as he obſerves in the Concluſion) how good the* LORD *is, and ready to help thoſe who fly unto him for Succour, whatſoever their Condition be.*

The Author of the Pſalm is unknown; but if I have gueſſed aright at the Connexion of this with the foregoing Pſalm, it is moſt probable it was compoſed by David: *who having in the* CV. *put them in Mind (as* Theodoret *obſerves) of the Promiſes made to the Patriarchs, and of the Bleſſings beſtowed on their Poſterity; and in the* CVI. *of their horrid Ingratitude for ſuch Benefits, and the Puniſhments, for that Cauſe, inflicted upon them: declares in this Pſalm the inexplicable Kindneſs of* GOD, *in their Freedom from Slavery; and in his careful Providence, as I ſaid, over all Mankind: which might give them the greater Incouragement to hope in him, if they ſerved him faithfully, who had taken them for his peculiar People.*

Ver. 1. O *Give Thanks unto the* LORD, *for he is good: for his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] O make your grateful Acknowledgments to the great LORD of the World; of whoſe Goodneſs you and your Forefathers have had ſuch long Experience, that you may conclude his loving Kindneſs will extend it ſelf to all ſucceeding Ages.

Ver. 2. *Let the Redeemed of the* LORD *ſay ſo, whom he hath redeemed from the Hand of the Enemy:*] Let them eſpecially call upon one another to give Thanks unto his Goodneſs, whom the LORD hath graciouſly redeemed from a ſad Captivity; into which they were reduced by their prevailing Enemies:

Ver. 3. *And gathered them out of the Lands, from the Eaſt, and from the Weſt, from the North, and from the South.*] And hath brought them back to their own Country again; from all the Lands, on every Side, into which they were diſperſed.

Ver. 4. *They wandred in the Wilderneſs in a ſolitary Way, they found no City to dwell in.*] And they alſo, who, travelling through vaſt Wilderneſſes and ſandy Deſarts, loſt their Way, and could find no Tract to lead them to a City inhabited.

Ver. 5. *Hungry and thirſty, their Soul fainted in them.*] But, in this Perplexity, wandred up and down ſo long, that all their Proviſion was ſpent, and they were ready to die with Hunger and Thirſt:

Ver. 6. *Then they cried unto the* LORD *in their Trouble, and* he *delivered them out of their Diſtreſſes.*] Yet then, recommending themſelves to the LORD, and earneſtly imploring his Help in this miſerable Strait; he mercifully delivered them out of it, and freed them from all their Anxieties:

Ver. 7. *And he led them forth by the right Way, that they might go to a City of Habitation.*] Directing them, when they were in a Maze, into the right Path again; which brought them to a Place inhabited, where they found Relief for their Neceſſities.

Ver. 8. *Oh that* Men *would praiſe the* LORD for *his Goodneſs, and* for *his wonderful Works to the Children of Men!*] O that ſuch Men would never forget to make their thankful Acknowledgments to the LORD, for this ſingular Kindneſs;

but every where proclaim his wonderful Works.

Ver. 9. *For he ſatisfieth the longing Soul, and filleth the hungry Soul with Goodneſs.*] Who thus ſeaſonably preſerved them from ſtarving, by providing, in this languiſhing Condition, Drink to quench their Thirſt, and Plenty of good Things to ſatisfie their hungry Appetite.

Ver. 10 *Such as ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death,* being *bound in Affliction and Iron:*] They alſo who have no other Dwelling but a dark Priſon, nay, a horrible Dungeon; where, to add to their Affliction, they are loaded with Iron Manacles or Fetters;

Ver. 11. *Becauſe they rebelled againſt the Words of* God, *and contemned the Counſel of the moſt High:*] As a juſt Puniſhment for the Crimes they had rebelliouſly committed againſt the expreſs Commands of God, and the plain Dictates and frequent Checks of their own Conſciences; which were the Voice of the moſt High, giving them wholeſome Counſel, tho' they contemned and deſpiſed it:

Ver. 12. *Therefore he brought down their Heart with Labour, they fell down, and* there was *none to help.*] And thereby provoked him to throw them into that miſerable Condition, to humble their proud Hearts by the Hardſhip of a tedious and painful Impriſonment; in which they lay ſo dejected and helpleſs, that they ſaw no humane Means whereby they ſhould be delivered.

Ver. 13. *Then they cried unto the* Lord *in their Trouble,* and *he ſaved them out of their Diſtreſſes.*] Yet they then making their Addreſſes to the Lord, and earneſtly beſeeching him to take Pity upon their wretched Eſtate; he was pleaſed mercifully to hear their Prayers, and free them from thoſe miſerable Straits:

Ver. 14. *He brought them out of Darkneſs, and the Shadow of Death, and brake their Bands in ſunder.*] Bringing them out of their ſad Confinement in that diſmal Dungeon; and ſetting their Hands and Feet at Liberty, from the Chains wherewith they were bound.

Ver. 15. *Oh that* Men *would praiſe the* Lord for his *Goodneſs, and* for *his wonderful Works to the Children of Men!*] O that ſuch Men would never forget to make their thankful Acknowledgments to the Lord, for his ſingular Kindneſs; but every where proclaim his wonderful Works:

Ver. 16. *For he hath broken the Gates of Braſs, and cut the Bars of Iron in ſunder.*] Who, when their Caſe was deſperate, removed the greateſt Obſtacles; and made even brazen Gates, and iron Bars, give way to their Eſcape.

Ver. 17. *Fools, becauſe of their Tranſgreſſion, and becauſe of their Iniquities, are afflicted.*] In like manner we ſee others, who, forgetting God, and ſottiſhly giving themſelves up to all kind of Debauchery, in an irregular Way of Living, fall into grievous Diſeaſes:

Ver. 18. *Their Soul abhorreth all manner of Meat, and they draw near unto the Gates of Death.*] Which not only quite take away their Appetite, but make them nauſeate all manner of Food, which they formerly abuſed; and thereby lay them ſo low, that they are at the very Brink of the Grave:

Ver. 19. *Then they cry unto the* Lord *in their Trouble, he ſaveth them out of their Diſtreſſes.*] Yet even theſe Men, when they make their Addreſſes unto the Lord, and in the weak Eſtate into which they have brought themſelves pray earneſtly to him, are wont to find Relief from him; when no Medicines whatſoever will avail them.

Ver. 20. *He ſent his Word and healed them, and delivered* them *from their Deſtruction.* He orders their Recovery, when all the Preſcriptions of Phyſicians prove ineffectual: nay, when they are left for Dead, raiſes them up to Life and Health again.

Ver. 21. *Oh that* Men *would praiſe the* Lord *for his Goodneſs, and* for *his wonderful Works to the Children of Men!*] O that theſe Men would be ſo grateful to the Lord, as never to forget his ſingular Kindneſs to them; but every where proclaim ſuch wonderful Works as theſe.

Ver. 22. *And let them ſacrifice the Sacrifices of Thankſgiving, and declare his Works with Rejoycing.*] And not content themſelves with the Sacrifices of Beaſts, (which in their Sickneſs they were apt to vow unto him) but offer thoſe far more acceptable Sacrifices of a grateful Heart: acknowledging his Goodneſs, and telling every body they meet withal, in ſuch a manner as may expreſs how much they are affected with it, what great Things the Lord hath done for them.

Ver. 23. *They that go down to the Sea in Ships, that do Buſineſs in great Waters:*] Who ſhews no leſs Kindneſs to thoſe that have Occaſion to be much upon the Sea; to fiſh, or to traffick, upon the main Ocean.

Ver. 24. *Theſe ſee the Works of the* Lord, *and his Wonders in the Deep.*] Where they behold remarkable Acts of Divine Providence; in the wonderful Alterations which he makes in that vaſt Collection of Waters.

Ver. 25. *For he commandeth, and raiſeth the ſtormy Wind, which lifteth up the Waves thereof.*] For when they are ſmooth and ſtill, a ſudden Tempeſt ariſes by his Command; which puts them into ſuch a Rage, that they are turned into ſwelling Waves and Billows.

Ver. 26. *They mount up to Heaven, they go down again to the Depths, their Soul is melted becauſe of Trouble.*] On which the Ships are ſometimes mounted up as high, as if they would touch the Clouds; and then ſink down as low, as if they would be buried in the Bottom of the Sea; to the great Aſtoniſhment of the Paſſengers, who are ready to die with Fear.

Ver. 27. *They reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken Man, and are at their Wits End.*] For they are ſo toſſed and whirled about, that as they are not able to ſtand upon the Decks; ſo the moſt skilful Mariners do not know which Way to ſteer; or what Courſe to take, to ſave themſelves from periſhing.

Ver. 28. *Then they cry unto the* Lord *in their Trouble, and he bringeth them out of their Diſtreſſes.*] And yet, when in the midſt of this great Strait they make their Addreſſes to the Lord, with earneſt Prayers for his Protection,

he

he is graciouſly pleaſed to hear their Cry; and to free them from that Anguiſh of Mind, which ſorely oppreſſes them.

Ver. 29. *He maketh the Storm a Calm, ſo that the Waves thereof are ſtill.*] For he ſilences the bluſtring Wind, and makes ſo great a Calm; that the ſwelling Waves lie quiet and ſtill.

Ver. 30. *Then are they glad, becauſe they be quiet; ſo he bringeth them unto their deſired Haven.*] Which happy Change turns their Fear into Joy; when they ſee, not only the Storm appeaſed, but gentle Gales ariſing to carry them directly to the Port, for which they are bound.

Ver. 31. *Oh that* Men *would praiſe the* LORD *for his Goodneſs, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men!*] O that they who are thus unexpectedly preſerved, would never forget to make their thankful Acknowledgments to the LORD, for this ſingular Kindneſs! But every where proclaim what Wonders he hath done for them.

Ver. 32. *Let them exalt him alſo in the Congregation of the People, and praiſe him in the Aſſembly of the Elders.*] Let them magnifie his Power and Goodneſs in the greateſt Aſſemblies of the People, eſpecially in his Temple: Let them praiſe him in the ſupreme Court of the Kingdom; that the Judges and Governours may be excited to make him their Truſt and Confidence.

Ver. 33. *He turneth Rivers into a Wilderneſs, and the Water-ſprings into dry Ground:*] Who turns well watered Countries into a mere Wilderneſs, and makes moiſt and fertil Soils become dry and barren Ground:

Ver. 34. *A fruitful Land into Barrenneſs, for the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.*] Where none of thoſe Fruits will grow, which before it plentifully yielded; becauſe of the ill Diſpoſition of the Inhabitants, who produce nothing but all manner of Vice and Wickedneſs.

Ver. 35. *He turneth the Wilderneſs into a ſtanding Water, and dry Ground into Water-Springs.*] And on the other Side, he turns a barren Deſart (for none of theſe Things come by chance) into rich and fruitful Paſtures: and ſends ſuch Plenty of Water into dry and ſandy Grounds;

Ver. 36. *And there he maketh the Hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a City for Habitation;*] That there they, who lived wretchedly before, find a comfortable Habitation: and are invited to build Towns and Cities in thoſe formerly deſolate Places.

Ver. 37. *And ſow the Fields, and plant Vineyards, which may yield Fruits of Increaſe.*] Where they ſow all manner of Grain, and plant Vineyards: which recompenſe their Pains with a plentiful Harveſt, and a joyful Vintage.

Ver. 38. *He bleſſeth them alſo, ſo that they are multiplied greatly, and ſuffereth not their Cattel to decreaſe.*] His Bleſſing alſo makes the Inhabitants fruitful, as well as their Ground: they grow exceeding populous, together with their Flocks and their Herds; which by the Increaſe of People are not diminiſh'd.

Ver. 39. *Again they are miniſhed and brought low through Oppreſſion, Affliction and Sorrow.*] But when they prove ungrateful to him, he quite alters the Courſe of his Providence; and on a ſudden ſends ſome grievous Peſtilence, which leſſens their Numbers: or lays them low by tyrannical Oppreſſors, (into whoſe Hands he delivers them) by Dearth, and other Calamities, which make them pine away in Grief and Sorrow.

Ver. 40. *He poureth Contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the Wilderneſs,* where there is *no Way.*] Their Princes and the moſt eminent Perſons in their Country, are not able to preſerve themſelves from Contempt and Scorn: To which they are ſo openly expoſed, that they who had Troops of Followers and Attendants, are utterly deſerted, and forced to walk in ſolitary Places to hide their Shame; without any means, that they can ſee, to recover their Thrones, out of which they are diſgracefully thrown.

Ver. 41. *Yet ſetteth he the Poor on high from Affliction, and maketh* him *Families like a Flock.*] Which he beſtows upon ſome poor deſpicable Perſon, whom, from a low Condition, he raiſes to the higheſt Dignity; and gives him a very numerous Iſſue, to maintain and continue the Honour he hath conferred on him.

Ver. 42. *The Righteous ſhall ſee* it, *and rejoice; and all Iniquity ſhall ſtop her Mouth.*] Which is a great Incouragement to the Righteous; who herein behold with Joy the wiſe and juſt Providence of Almighty GOD: But gives the wicked (who under thoſe bad Princes were inſolent, and full of proud Boaſts) ſuch a Rebuke, that they hang down their Heads, and are confoundedly put to Silence.

Ver. 43. *Whoſo* is *wiſe, and will obſerve thoſe* Things, *even they ſhall underſtand the loving Kindneſs of the* LORD.] And therefore whoſoever will be truly wiſe, ought to mark and ponder ſuch Paſſages as theſe in the Divine Government: that they may make others, who are leſs conſiderate, underſtand how very kind and gracious the LORD is, to thoſe who ſtudy to pleaſe him, and to obtain his Favour by dutiful Obedience and humble Submiſſion to him.

PSALM CVIII.

A Song or Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Title tells us this Song-Pſalm *(ſee the Reaſon of this Name upon* Pſal. LXVII.*) was made by* David: *and was placed here, as I conjecture, becauſe now he was in a hopeful Way to perfect ſome Victories, which he had begun to win; whereby ſome of thoſe Captives in ſtrange Lands (mentioned* Ver.

Ver. 2, *and* 3. *of the foregoing Pſalm) were reſcued and ſet at Liberty. What thoſe Nations were, over whom he was about to triumph, ſee in the Title of* Pſalm *LX: For the latter Part of this Pſalm, from* Ver. 6. *to the End, is the very ſame (with ſome light Variations) with the eight laſt Verſes of that; as the former Part of it is very little different from the five laſt Verſes of* Pſalm *LVII. Which the Pſalmiſt, I ſuppoſe, here placed inſtead of thoſe wherewith LX. begins (though he retains all the latter End of it) becauſe now, as I ſaid, he had made ſome Progreſs in thoſe Wars, which he was but entring upon, when he made that LX.* Pſalm. *And therefore here he begins with Thanks to* God *for his Mercy, as there he laments the ill Condition wherein he found the Affairs of the Kingdom, when he came to the Crown.*

Ver. 1. O God, *my Heart is fixed, I will ſing and give Praiſe, even with my Glory.*] My Heart is ready, O moſt gracious God, it is firmly reſolved to give thee moſt ſolemn Thanks: my Tongue alſo, wherewith I ought to glorifie thee, ſhall ſing of thy Goodneſs; and, with all the Expreſſions of Joy, ſet forth thy Praiſe.

Ver. 2. *Awake Pſaltery and Harp: I* my ſelf *will awake early.*] Nor ſhall any of the Inſtruments of Muſick be ſilent, but accompany my Hymns: which I will ſing unto thee ſo early, that I will prevent the riſing of the Sun.

Ver. 3. *I will praiſe thee, O* Lord, *among the People: and I will ſing Praiſes unto thee among the Nations.*] Nor will I meerly make thee my private Acknowledgments, but publiſh thy Praiſe in the greateſt Aſſemblies of thy People, among whom this Song ſhall be ſung: yea, other Nations ſhall read therein, how thankful I am for what thou haſt begun to do for us.

Ver. 4. *For thy Mercy is great above the Heavens: and thy Truth* reacheth *unto the Clouds.*] For it is fit my Thankfulneſs ſhould be as boundleſs as thy Mercy: which infinitely tranſcends all my Expreſſions; and hath nothing equal to it, but thy Faithfulneſs and Truth.

Ver. 5. *Be thou exalted, O* God, *above the Heavens: and thy Glory above all the Earth;*] Be thou more and more exalted in theſe, O God; and raiſe to thy ſelf thereby the higheſt Praiſes: ſpread the Fame of them every-where, that thou mayeſt be glorified throughout the World.

Ver. 6. *That thy beloved may be delivered: ſave* with *thy right Hand, and anſwer me.*] Eſpecially now, I beſeech thee to grant my humble Petitions, that by thy mighty Power, accompanying my Arms, I may be an Inſtrument of delivering thy beloved People from their Oppreſſours.

Ver. 7. God *hath ſpoken in his Holineſs, I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth.*] Why ſhould I doubt of it, and not rather rejoice in aſſured Hope of a perfect Victory? ſince God, who is moſt holy, and cannot lie, hath ſaid he will deliver them by my Hand; (2 *Sam.* III. 18.) and hath already put me in Poſſeſſion, (as he alſo promiſed, *Ver.* 2.) of all the Country about *Samaria*; which I will diſtribute under ſuch Officers, as I think fit to ſet over them.

Ver. 8. *Gilead* is *mine, Manaſſeh* is *mine, Ephraim alſo is the Strength of mine Head, Judah* is *my Lawgiver.*] *Gilead* alſo, and *Manaſſeh*, who were lately under another King, (2 *Sam.* II. 9.) have ſubmitted themſelves to me; and ſo hath the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which is a main Support of my Authority; theſe, and all the reſt of the Tribes of *Iſrael*, are united to the Royal Tribe of *Judah*; which (according to the Prophecy of our Forefather, *Gen.* XLIX. 10.) ſupplies me with wiſe and able Men to adminiſter the Laws, and order the Affairs of my Kingdom.

Ver. 9. *Moab* is *my Waſh-pot, over Edom will I caſt out my Shoe: over Philiſtia will I triumph.*] Which ſhall now extend its ſelf beyond the Bounds of this Country; for I will tread the *Moabites* under my Feet, and reduce them to the vileſt Servitude; (2 *Sam.* VIII. 2.) I will trample alſo upon the *Edomites*, and make them my Slaves: (*Ib.* Verſe 14.) the *Philiſtines* alſo, whom I have begun to ſmite, (2 *Sam.* V. 17, 22, *&c.*) ſhall add to my Triumphs, and be forced to ſubmit unto me, as their conquering Lord, (2 *Sam.* VIII. 1.)

Ver. 10. *Who will bring me into the ſtrong City? who will lead me into Edom?*] Theſe are difficult Things indeed, and I may well ask, when I conſider how potent theſe Nations are, by what Power or Force I ſhall be able to enter that ſtrongly fenced City, in the Frontiers of their Country? Who is it that will conduct me into *Idumæa*, and make me a Maſter of it?

Ver. 11. Wilt *not* thou, *O* God, who *haſt caſt us off? and wilt not thou, O* God, *go forth with our Hoſts?*] But I can ſoon anſwer my ſelf: For why ſhould I deſpair of thy Preſence with us, O God of all Power and Might; who formerly indeed didſt reject us, and forſake the Conduct of our Armies, (1 *Sam.* XXXI. 1, 7.) but now, I hope, wilt graciouſly aid us, and make us victorious.

Ver. 12. *Give us Help from Trouble: for vain is the Help of Man.*] Do not fruſtrate theſe Hopes; but afford us thy Help againſt the *Syrians* alſo (2 *Sam.* VIII. 5.) now that they diſtreſs us: for no humane Force is able to deliver us, nor have we any Confidence in it, but in thee alone.

Ver. 13. *Through* God *we ſhall do valiantly: for he* it is that *ſhall tread down our Enemies.*] By whoſe Aſſiſtance we will behave our ſelves couragiouſly, and do valiant Acts: For God will utterly rout our Enemies; and tread them down like the Mire in the Streets.

PSALM

PSALM CIX.

To the chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

Moſt Interpreters conſent to the Opinion of Aben Ezra, *and* D. Kimchi, *that* David *(to whom the Title aſcribes this Pſalm) hath reſpect here, in the firſt place, to the grievous Perſecution which he ſuffered by* Saul, *and ſome of his Court: who would let him enjoy no Reſt, but having driven him from his own Houſe, purſued him ſo cloſe, whereſoever he heard he was, that he could have no certain Dwelling: but became like a Locuſt (as he ſpeaks* Ver. 23.*) which having no Neſt (as* Bochartus *obſerves, P.* II. *L.* IV. de Animal. ſac. cap. 2. *leaps or flies from Hedge to Hedge; as he did from Place to Place. To provoke* Saul *to this Rage againſt him, as they all loaded him with many Calumnies (which made* David *curſe them to* Saul's *Face,* 1 Sam. *XXVI.* 19.*) ſo one eſpecially among the reſt, who is generally thought to be* Doeg *the* Edomite, *was notoriouſly guilty of this Wickedneſs: whom, by a prophetical Spirit, he here moſt ſolemnly curſes, in a direful manner; and pronounces the heavieſt Judgment upon him and his Family: his inhumane Villany being ſo great, that it made him an exact Picture of the Traitor* Judas, *to whom the Apoſtle Saint* Peter, Act. *I.* 20. *applies the eighth Verſe of this Pſalm. The reſt of which is ſpent in Prayer to God, againſt ſuch falſe Accuſers; and in Vows of the Praiſes he would give Him, when he was delivered from the Miſchief, which thereby they deſigned to him. Accordingly, when he was ſettled in his Throne, he ſent this Pſalm among others, unto the Maſter of Muſick in the Tabernacle; to perpetuate the Memory of God's Mercy to him.*

Concerning ſuch Imprecations, as we here meet withal, ſee the Argument of Pſalm *XXXV. which is of the ſame nature with this.*

1. *Hold not thy Peace, O God of my Praiſe.*] HO God, the ſupreme Judge of the World, who, as Thou haſt given me hitherto continual Cauſe to praiſe Thee, ſo I hope wilt ſtill vindicate my Honour; I appeal unto thy Majeſty: beſeeching Thee to declare thy ſelf on my Side; and make it appear that I am innocent.

Ver. 2. *For the Mouth of the Wicked, and the Mouth of the Deceitful are open againſt me: they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying Tongue.*] For men of no Conſcience, have taken the Liberty to invent the moſt miſchievous Lies of me; whereby tho' they always ſpeak me fair to my Face, they have wickedly traduced me to *Saul*, behind my Back.

Ver. 3. *They compaſſed me about alſo with Words of Hatred: and fought againſt me without a Cauſe.*] And ſpread thoſe falſe Reports ſo diligently, that I find they have made me odious every where: and thereupon, without any Provocation from me, have levied War againſt me, to take away my Life, 1 *Sam.* XXIII. 8. 25.

Ver. 4. *For my Love they are my Adverſaries: but* I give my ſelf unto *Prayer.*] Who have been ſo far from doing them any Harm, that I have deſerved well of them: (1 *Sam.* XIX. 4. 5.) and even now, when they requite my Kindneſs with Endeavours to deſtroy me, do nothing but recommend my ſelf by Prayer to thy Protection; refuſing to make uſe of the Opportunity I had to revenge my ſelf upon them, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 9. 10, *&c.*

Ver. 5. *And they have rewarded me Evil for Good, and Hatred for my Love.*] And yet this will not mollifie them, but ſtill they are ſo extremely ungrateful, as to repay my Kindneſs, with new Attempts to do me Miſchief, (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 2.) And the more Affection I expreſs, with the greater Hatred am I proſecuted.

Ver. 6. *Set thou a wicked Man over him, and let Satan ſtand at his right hand.*] So implacable is his Malice, who is the principal Author of the Calumnies wherewith I am loaded, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 9, 11.) againſt whom therefore I implore thy Juſtice, O moſt righteous Judge of the World: Let the worſt Man that can be found, be appointed to hear his Cauſe when he is accuſed; and his moſt malicious Adverſary plead againſt him.

Ver. 7. *When he ſhall be judged, let him be condemned, and let his Prayer become Sin.*] When Sentence is given let him be condemned to be as guilty, as really he is: and if he petition for a Pardon, let it not only be rejected, but prove an Aggravation of his Crimes.

Ver. 8. *Let his Days be few,* and *let another take his Office.*] Let him (and the falſe Traitor, who in future times will uſe the *Meſſiah*, as now they do me) be cut off before his time: and his Office, (1 *Sam.* XXI. 7. XXII. 9.) wherein he behaves himſelf with ſuch inſufferable Inſolence and Falſhood, be transferred to a better Man.

Ver. 9. *Let his Children be fatherleſs, and his Wife a Widow.*] Let not his Fatherleſs Children ſucceed him in any thing that he hath: nor his Widow have any thing left to maintain her.

Ver. 10. *Let his Children be continually Vagabonds, and beg: let them ſeek* their Bread *alſo out of their deſolate places.*] Let them not have ſo much as an Houſe, wherein to put their Heads: but be perpetual Vagabonds, ſupporting a miſerable Life by begging an Alms; and ſeeking where to lodge, becauſe their own Dwellings are laid waſte and deſolate.

Ver. 11. *Let the Extortioner catch all that he hath: and let the Stranger ſpoil his Labour.*] Let his Creditor (pretending a Judgment) ſeize on all his Eſtate: and a Stranger by that means, reap the Fruit of all his Care and Labour.

Ver. 12. *Let there be none to extend Mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherleſs Children.*] Let no Man ſhew the leaſt Kindneſs to his Memory; or upon that account beſtow an Alms upon his Fatherleſs Children.

Ver. 13. *Let his Poſterity be cut off,* and *in the Generation following let their Name be blotted out.*] Let them rather be odious for his Sake, and the ſooner deſtroyed: ſo that they be the laſt of the Name; and, in the next Generation, not one of that Family be found.

Ver. 14. *Let the Iniquity of his Fathers be remembred with the* LORD: *and let not the Sin of his Mother be blotted out.*] But according to the juſt Sentence of thy Law, (*Ex.* XX. 5.) let the Puniſhments (which were due long ago, but thy Patience moved Thee to forbear) fall all upon him: let him ſuffer for the Sins of his Progenitors on both Sides, in whoſe wicked Steps he would not ceaſe to tread.

Ver. 15. *Let them be before the* LORD *continually, that he may cut off the Memory of them from the Earth.*] Let it be ſeen that their Wickedneſs is not forgotten, though committed many Years ago: but proſecute it with a continued Vengeance; till no body remember, that there were ſuch People in the World.

Ver. 16. *Becauſe that he remembred not to ſhew Mercy, but perſecuted the poor and needy Man, that he might even ſlay the broken in heart.*] This will be but a deſerved Recompence for all his Cruelties: For as he let all Benefits ſlip out of his Mind, and was ungrateful to thoſe, who had obliged him: ſo he had no Senſe of that common Compaſſion, which is due to the Calamitous; but when he ſaw me in a neceſſitous Condition, deſtitute of Friends, and dejected in Spirit, made no other uſe of it but to perſecute me to Death.

Ver. 17. *As he loved curſing, ſo it let come unto him: as he delighted not in bleſſing, ſo let it be far from him.*] What can be more juſt, than that the Miſchief, in which he delighted, and both wiſhed and deſigned to others, ſhould fall upon himſelf? and that he ſhould never meet with the Bleſſing of thoſe righteous Courſes which he always hated and avoided?

Ver. 18. *As he cloathed himſelf with curſing, like as with his Garment: ſo let it come into his Bowels like Water, and like Oyl into his Bones.*] His very Buſineſs was to ſlander others, every-where; taking a pride in the miſchievous Effects of his curſed Lies: and therefore let him feel the miſerable Fruit of his Wickedneſs, ſpreading it ſelf, like the Water he drinks, into every Vein of him; and ſticking as cloſe to him, as Oyl unto the Bones.

Ver. 19. *Let it be unto him as the Garment* which *covereth him, and for a Girdle wherewith he is girded continually.*] Let him be involved in perpetual Misfortunes and Miſeries; and never be able to ſhake them off: Let him be hampered with Straits and Difficulties; without any poſſibility of getting out.

Ver. 20. Let *this* be *the reward of mine Adverſaries from the* LORD, *and of them that ſpeak evil againſt my Soul.*] This ſhall moſt certainly be the Reward, which the righteous Lord will give to my malicious Adverſaries; for all the Pains they have taken, by ſlanderous Reports and Calumnies, to take away my Life.

Ver. 21. *But do thou for me,* O GOD *the Lord, for thy Name ſake: becauſe thy Mercy is good, deliver thou me.*] Which I commend to thy Protection, O Lord, the Governour of all things; beſeeching Thee to take my Part, and appear for me: though not for my Honour, yet for thy own; whoſe Kindneſs is ſo exceeding bountiful unto all, that for that Reaſon I am encouraged to hope Thou wilt deliver me; to whom Thou haſt engaged thy ſelf, by many Promiſes of Mercy.

Ver. 22. *For I* am *poor and needy, and my Heart is wounded within me.*] Which I never needed more than now: For I am ſo poor, and forſaken of all my Friends, (1 *Sam.* XXV. 8, *&c.*) that I am ready to faint away with Grief and Sorrow, like one that is wounded at the very Heart.

Ver. 23. *I am gone like the Shadow when it declineth: I am toſſed up and down as the Locuſt.*] The evening Shadow doth not vaniſh ſooner than I, from the Place of my preſent Abode, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 1, 3, 5. XXIII. 13, 14.) which I am forced to quit on a ſudden; and to wander like the Locuſt, which flies, or is driven, with the Wind, uncertainly from Place to Place.

Ver. 24. *My Knees are weak through faſting, and my Fleſh faileth of Fatneſs.*] And for want of Food in thoſe deſart Places, I am ſometimes ſcarce able to remove: for my Body, which heretofore was plump and fat, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 12.) is now grown lank and thin like one of thoſe miſerable lean Creatures.

Ver 25. *I became alſo a Reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they ſhaked their Heads.*] Which inſtead of moving their Pity, hath expoſed me to ſuch Contempt and Scorn; that when I am ſeen by any of them, they deride and ſcoff at me as an undone Wretch, that vainly hopes to eſcape their Hands.

Ver. 26. *Help me,* O LORD *my* GOD; *O ſave me according to thy Mercy.*] But my Hope is, that Thou, O Lord, who haſt hitherto been my moſt gracious God, wilt ſeaſonably interpoſe for my Relief; and deliver me, out of that tender Mercy, which is wont to extend it ſelf to thoſe who have nothing elſe to depend upon.

Ver. 27. *That they may know that this is thy Hand: that thou* LORD *haſt done it.*] Whereby they themſelves may be convinced, and forced to acknowledge; that, not by Chance, no more than by my ſmall Forces, but by thy Almighty Power alone, and thy Care of me, O Lord, I am delivered.

Ver. 28. *Let them curſe, but bleſs thou: when they ariſe, let them be aſhamed: but let thy Servant rejoice.*] Thy Bleſſing and Protection I implore; which if Thou wilt vouchſafe me, let them go on to curſe and ſlander me as long as they pleaſe; it ſhall not hurt me; nay, let them aſſault me with armed Force, they ſhall only be confounded at their vain Attempt; and give thy Servant the greater Cauſe, to rejoice at their Diſappointment.

Ver. 29. *Let mine Adverſaries be cloathed with Shame: and let them cover themſelves with their own Confuſion as with a Mantle.*] Which ſhall ſo increaſe the Confuſion of my malicious Adverſaries; that they ſhall not be able to bear the Diſgrace: but wiſh they could hide themſelves from the Sight of their Shame, which their own Wickedneſs hath brought upon them.

Ver. 30. *I will greatly praiſe the* LORD *with my Mouth; yea, I will praiſe him among the Multitude.*] In hope of which Deſeat, I vow before-hand to the Lord the beſt Expreſſions of my Gratitude that I am able to make: not only in private, but in the greateſt Aſſemblies; where

where I will not ceaſe to praiſe his Almighty Love.

Ver. 31. *For he ſhall ſtand at the right Hand of the Poor, to ſave* him *from thoſe that condemn his Soul.*] And bid them truſt in GOD; who hath pleaded my Cauſe, and reſcued me from Death; and will ever be the Advocate of him that hath no Helper; but depends on his Goodneſs, to deliver him from the Hands of thoſe Judges, who proſecute the unjuſt Sentence they have paſſed upon him to loſe his Life.

PSALM CX.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

There is the ſame Reaſon to think this Pſalm was compoſed by David *(not by ſome other concerning* David*) that there is to conclude all the reſt to be ſo, which have the ſame Title. And then, as it is very plain he ſpeaks of ſome Perſon much greater than himſelf, whom he calls his* LORD, *ſo it can be no other, but the* LORD CHRIST, *of whom he here propheſies. Not, as he is wont to do elſewhere, with reſpect to himſelf, in the firſt place, as his Type and Figure; but in plain Words, which can belong to none but* CHRIST *alone. For no other King but He, can be ſaid in any ſenſe, to ſit at* GOD's *right Hand; nor was there any Prieſt of the Order of* Melchiſedeck, *that could be a Shadow of him.*

David indeed ſeems once to have exerciſed the Office of a Prieſt, when he bleſſed the People, *at the bringing of the Ark to* Sion, (2 Sam. VI. 18.) *and ſo to have been then both King and Prieſt in one Perſon, as* Melchiſedeck *was; but not a* Prieſt for ever, *on whom the Office was perpetually eſtabliſh'd, and that* by an Oath; *as it was on the Prieſt here mentioned.*

And therefore it is in vain to endeavour to accommodate any part of this Pſalm to David; *who conquered many of the neighbouring Countries, ſmote their Kings, made them bring him Tributes, and at laſt ſmote* the Head of the Country of Rabbah *(as ſome render the laſt Words of the* ſixth Verſe *of this Pſalm) that is, the King of the Children of* Ammon: *But ſtill we are to ſeek, how the reſt can be applied to him, who never had any Pretence to ſuch an Authority as is here deſcribed, nor can in any ſenſe call himſelf my* LORD; *but as our* LORD CHRIST *hath demonſtrated, ſpake concerning Him,* (Matt. XXII. 43. &c.) *and his Exaltation, after his Reſurrection from the Dead, (as St.* Peter *and St.* Paul *alſo ſhew,* Act. II. 34, 35. 1 Cor. XV. 25. Heb. IV. 1, 13. V. 6.) *when he ſet up another Prieſthood, and aboliſhed that of* Moſes; *which Change is here predicted.*

And though the Jews *have taken a great deal of Pains to wreſt this Pſalm to another Senſe; yet they are ſo divided in their Opinions about it, (ſpeaking inconſiſtent Things, like drunken Men, as St.* Chryſoſtom's *Words are, or rather, ſays he, like Men in the dark, running againſt one another,) that from thence alone we may be ſatisfied they are in the wrong, and have their Eyes blinded; elſe they would not have embraced ſuch Interpretations as theſe, which may be ſeen in them that have written upon this Pſalm, which ſome of the* Jews *themſelves (ſuch as* R. Moſes Hadarſan, Saadias Gaon, *and divers others whom I might mention) have been forced to acknowledge belongs to* CHRIST; *and is a very plain Prediction of his Divinity, his royal Dignity, his Prieſthood, and his Victories and Triumphs; which the Pſalmiſt ſets forth as follows.*

1. THE LORD *ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right Hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footſtool.*] This is the Decree of the eternal LORD, that the great Perſon whom we expect, and whom I honour as my Lord and Maſter, ſhall be advanced (after his Sufferings) to the higheſt Dignity (1 *King.* II. 19.) in the Heavens; and reign with him as the King of all the World, till he have perfectly ſubdued (*Joſh.* X. 24.) the moſt powerful Oppoſers of his Kingdom; and overcome Death it ſelf, by whom all Mankind are conquered, 1 *Cor.* XV. 25, 26.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD *ſhall ſend the Rod of thy Strength out of Sion; rule thou in the mids of thine Enemies.*] The eternal LORD, who hath thus decreed to honour Thee, O moſt mighty Prince, will make *Sion*, firſt of all, to feel how powerful thy Sceptre is, (*Act.* I. 8. II. 34, 37.) and thence extend thy Empire over all the Earth; where I wiſh Thou mayeſt, and foretel Thou wilt, prevail over all Infidelity, Idolatry, Superſtition and Impiety; which will ſet themſelves againſt thy Authority.

Ver. 3. *Thy People* ſhall be *willing in the Day of thy Power, in the Beauties of Holineſs from the Womb of the Morning: thou haſt the Dew of thy Youth.*] For in the Day when thy Forces, (2 *Tim.* II. 3.) compleatly armed with a divine Power, (*Act.* IV. 33.) ſhall march forth to ſubdue the World unto thy Obedience: They that are fit for thy Kingdom (*Luke* IX. 62. *Act.* XIII. 48.) ſhall chearfully ſubmit themſelves, and preſent Thee with free-will Offerings, in token of their abſolute Subjection unto Thee; (*Act.* II. 45. IV. 34.) And great ſhall be the Number of choſen Men, (1 *John* II. 13.) who glad to ſee the Night of Ignorance gone, ſhall at thy firſt Appearance by the Celeſtial Bleſſing, fall unto Thee as thick as the Morning Dew.

Ver. 4. *The* LORD *hath ſworn, and will not repent, Thou* art *a Prieſt for ever, after the Order of Melchiſedeck.*] And happy are they who live under thy Government; for the LORD hath unchangeably reſolved that Thou ſhalt be a Prieſt as well as a King; with full Power to bleſs all thy Subjects, not only in that, but in all future Ages, even to all Eternity: For Thou ſhalt not be a Prieſt like thoſe after *Aaron's* Order, who die to make room for others; but, like that great King and Prieſt *Melchiſedeck*, ſhalt neither have any Predeceſſor, nor Succeſſor in thine Office, but continue a Royal Prieſt for evermore, *Heb.* VII.

Ver. 5. *The* LORD *at thy right Hand ſhall ſtrike through Kings in the Day of his Wrath.*] Who, as he will be moſt compaſſionate to all thoſe that heartily acknowledge him for their LORD, and ſubmit unto his Government; ſo will

will break in Pieces the greateſt Powers on Earth that provoke his Diſpleaſure by obſtinate oppoſal of his Authority at thy right Hand.

Ver. 6. *He ſhall judge among the Heathen, he ſhall fill* the Places *with the dead Bodies: he ſhall wound the Heads over many Countries.*] From whence he ſhall demonſtrate himſelf to all the Heathen World, to be their Law-giver and their Judge; taking a ſevere Vengeance on thoſe that perſecute his Subjects, and deſtroying, at laſt, even that mighty Empire which ſhall then rule over many Countries.

Ver. 7. *He ſhall drink of the Brook in the way: and therefore ſhall he lift up the Head.*] But before all this, he ſhall firſt humble himſelf to the meaneſt Condition; not living in the State of a King here in this World, but of a wayfaring Man, (*Luke* IX. 56.) who is content with ſuch Proviſion as he meets withal. For which Cauſe, after the enduring many Hardſhips, even Death it ſelf, he ſhall be highly exalted to his royal and prieſtly Dignity in the Heavens; from whence he ſhall never fall.

PSALM CXI.

Hallelujah, *i. e. Praiſe the* LORD.

ARGUMENT.

It is certain this is *the Title of the Pſam, which conſiſts of as many ſhort Meters as there are Letters in the* Hebrew *Alphabet; and therefore cannot begin with* Hallelujah, *whoſe firſt Letter is the* fifth, *not the firſt Letter in that Alphabet. In which Order it proceeds for the better help of the Memory: Being compoſed thus artificially, that every one, as well as the Singers to (whom the* Hallelujah *perhaps is particularly directed) might have in their Minds a brief Form of thanking* GOD *(eſpecially upon Feſtival Days) for the wonderful Things he had done for that Nation.*

It was a Meditation which the Author had in time of Peace and Quiet; for in Diſtreſs, or immediately after a great Deliverance, Mens Spirits are not at Liberty to uſe ſuch Art and Curioſity in their Compoſures, as there is in this Pſalm; being full at thoſe Seaſons of ſuch Paſſions as make them neglect it, even when they are inclined to uſe it, (ſee Pſalm XXV.*) For which Reaſon I think* Theodoret's *Opinion hath no ground; that the Pſalmiſt hath reſpect to the great Victory obtained by* Jehoſhaphat *over the* Ammonites, *and other Nations, who invaded his Kingdom; for which they gave thanks to* GOD *preſently after,* 2 Chron. XX. *It is more likely that* David *who compoſed thoſe larger Forms of Commemoration,* Pſalm CV. *and* CVI. *made this (as I ſaid) for a compendious Remembrance of what is there more largely delivered. And that he might not exceed the Number of the Ten Commandments (as ſome give the Reaſon of it) in the Verſes of this Pſalm, the Meters of the two laſt are ſo ſhort, that they have each of them* three *Letters of the Alphabet in them, whereas all the former have but* two.

1. PRaiſe ye the LORD. *I will praiſe the* LORD *with* my *whole Heart, in the Aſſembly of the Upright, and* in *the Congregation.*] I will make my thankful Acknowledgments to the LORD, not only with my Lips, or with ſome ſlight affections of my Mind; but with all my Heart and Soul; And that not only in the private Society of thoſe good Men, whom I am more intimately acquainted withal; but in the publick Congregation of all his People.

Ver. 2. *The Works of the* LORD are *great, ſought out of all them that have Pleaſure therein.*] Who ought to join together to praiſe the LORD for his mighty and wonderful Works, which it will not coſt them much labour to underſtand; for they are eaſily found out by all thoſe who take any pleaſure in ſuch Inquiries.

Ver. 3. *His Work* is *honourable and glorious: and his Righteouſneſs endureth for ever.*] And there is not one of them but is full of Majeſty and Splendor; and the Fruit of his infinite Bounty, and Faithfulneſs to his Promiſe, which he ſtill expreſſes towards us; and will do ſo for ever.

Ver. 4. *He hath made his wonderful Works to be remembred: the* LORD is *gracious and full of Compaſſion.*] And ſuch is his Goodneſs, leſt we ſhould forget his Benefits, He hath inſtituted ſolemn Times for the Commemoration of the Wonders he hath done for us, (*Exod.* XII. 14. XIII. 3, 9, *&c.*) which are everlaſting Teſtimonies, that we ſerve a moſt gracious and compaſſionate Lord.

Ver. 5. *He hath given Meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his Covenant.*] Who gave our Forefathers (whom by his wonderful Works he poſſeſſed with the Fear of him) (*Exod.* XIV. 31.) the Spoil of the *Egyptians*, (*Exod.* XII. 35, 36.) and afterward fed them with Manna in the Wilderneſs, (*Exod.* XVI.) according to his Covenant, which he had made long before, (*Gen.* XV. 14.) and will never forget in future Ages.

Ver. 6. *He hath ſhewed his People the Power of his Works, that he may give them the Heritage of the Heathen.*] He hath evidently demonſtrated to his People the greatneſs of his Power in deſtroying *Sihon* the *Amorite*, (*Deut.* II. 24, 25.) and *Og* the King of *Baſhan*, (*Deut.* III. 21, 24.) with the reſt of the *Amorites* and other Nations, in the Land of *Canaan*: (*Joſh.* X. 6, 11, 12, *&c.*) which he took from the antient Inhabitants, that he might give it us for our Poſſeſſion.

Ver. 7. *The Works of his Hands* are *Verity and Judgments, all his Commandments* are *ſure.*] In which he did them no wrong; but was exactly juſt in fulfilling his Promiſe to us, and in executing his Judgments upon thoſe wicked Wretches, (*Deut.* IX. 5. *Gen.* XV. 16.) For all his Orders of either kind, are in purſuance of moſt righteous Decrees.

Ver. 8. *They ſtand faſt for ever and ever*, and are *done in Truth and Uprightneſs.*] Which he doth not alter and change at pleaſure; but hath ſettled as eternal Rules: becauſe there is no Partiality or Iniquity in them; but they were enacted with a ſincere Reſpect to all Men's Good and Happineſs.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *He ſent Redemption unto his People, he hath commmanded his Covenant for ever: Holy and Reverend* is *his Name.*] And it was in Conformity to theſe that he at firſt ſent *Moſes* and *Aaron*, to bring our Fathers out of *Egypt*, (*Exod.* VI. 6.) and then exerciſed his ſupreme Authority over them, in giving them a Law, which he tied them by a Covenant perpetually to obſerve; (*Exod.* XIX. 4, 5. XXIV. 8.) Appearing in ſuch Majeſty to them, (*Exod.* XX. 18. XXIV. 10, 11.) as might poſſeſs them with an awful Regard to him; and make them for ever dread, by any Profaneneſs, to offend him, who infinitely excels all other Beings.

Ver. 10. *The Fear of the* LORD *is the beginning of Wiſdom: a good Underſtanding have all they that do* his Commandments: *his Praiſe endureth for ever.*] And indeed, it is the firſt and principal Point of Wiſdom to fear the LORD, and carefully obſerve his Commandments: the Practice of which gives Men a better Underſtanding of what is good for them, than any politick Maxims, can infuſe into them. Therefore let the LORD be for ever praiſed, who hath given us theſe good and wholſome Laws; and thereby ſhewn us the Way to eternal Honour and Praiſe.

PSALM CXII.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm is compoſed after the very ſame Manner with the Former; and ſeems to be intended for a ſhort Commentary upon the laſt Verſe of it: ſhewing how well and wiſely they conſult their own Good and Happineſs, who obſerve GOD's *Commandments; eſpecially thoſe about Charity, or doing Good to others. Of which that they might be always mindful the Pſalm is contrived for the Help of their Memories, into as many ſhort Verſicles, as there are Letters in the Hebrew Alphabet. Hallelujah therefore is no part of them, but the Title prefixt to the Pſalm (ſee* Arg. *upon* Pſalm CXI.) *to excite them to praiſe the* LORD; *who had made it their preſent Intereſt to be religious.*

1. PRaiſe ye *the* LORD. *Bleſſed* is *the Man* that *feareth the* LORD, that *delighteth greatly in his Commandments.*] Happy is that Man whoſe chiefeſt Care it is to pleaſe the LORD; by obſerving his Commandments: which will yield, in the Iſſue, the higheſt Pleaſure and Satisfaction to himſelf.

Ver. 2. *His Seed ſhall be mighty upon Earth: the Generation of the Upright ſhall be bleſſed.*] And procure a Bleſſing alſo upon all belonging to him: firſt, upon his Children, and thoſe that ſhall deſcend from them in future Times; who ſhall fare the better, and be more powerful and proſperous, for the ſincere Vertue of their pious Forefathers.

Ver. 3. *Wealth and Riches* ſhall be *in his Houſe: and his Righteouſneſs endureth for ever.*] And next on his Eſtate: which ſhall not only be rich and plentiful, but ſo firmly ſettled and entailed on his Poſterity; that they ſhall reap the perpetual Fruit of his Juſtice and Charity.

Ver. 4. *Unto the Upright there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs: he is gracious, and full of Compaſſion, and righteous.*] Or if any Affliction come, it will be ſo far from making him unhappy; that, beſides the Divine Comforts imparted to him for his Support, it will make the Vertue of upright Men the more illuſtrious: while one exerciſes Meekneſs and Sweetneſs to thoſe that provoke him; another forgives Offences, and pities the Inſtruments of his Trouble; and a third exerciſes the greater Juſtice of Mercy, and will not be tempted to do any diſhoneſt or cruel Thing for his own Deliverance.

Ver. 5. *A good Man ſheweth Favour, and lendeth; he will guide his Affairs with Diſcretion.*] But, above all other Men, he leads the moſt comfortable Life, who is ſo kind, that he ſupplies the Needs of others; giving to one, and lending to another, as occaſion ſerves: and yet ordering all his Affairs ſo judiciouſly, that he doth not impair, but rather maintain, the good Eſtate of his own Family.

Ver. 6. *Surely he ſhall not be moved for ever: the Righteous ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance.*] Sure it will not be in the Power of the moſt mighty and malicious Enemies (tho' they may diſturb him) quite to overthrow him: and when they are forgotten, or mentioned with Contempt, the worthy Actions of this ſort of Righteous Men, ſhall be celebrated with never-ceaſing Praiſes.

Ver. 7. *He ſhall not be afraid of evil Tidings: his Heart is fixed, truſting in the* LORD.] He is not affrighted and diſcompoſed at the falſe Reports that are raiſed of him; nor at the Rumour of Dangers which threaten him: being prepared for ſuch Things as theſe, by a ſettled Truſt and Hope in God; that he will take Care of him, who hath been as kind as he could to others in their Diſtreſſes.

Ver. 8. *His Heart* is *eſtabliſhed, he ſhall not be afraid, untill he ſee* his Deſire *upon his Enemies.*] This Confidence is the Prop and Support of his Soul; which will not let him be diſmayed: but makes him expect the Time, when he ſhall be able ſecurely to look upon all his Enemies.

Ver. 9. *He hath diſperſed, he hath given to the Poor; his Righteouſneſs endureth for ever; his Horn ſhall be exalted with Honour.*] He doth not merely heap up Riches for himſelf; but diſpenſes them to others, eſpecially to the Poor and Needy, with a liberal Hand: Nor is he weary of well-doing, but ever producing ſome new Fruit of his Charity, which ſhall gain him the greateſt Honour, and raiſe him to an illuſtrious Degree of Power and Authority.

Ver. 10. *The Wicked ſhall ſee* it, *and be grieved; he ſhall gnaſh with his Teeth, and melt away; the Deſire of the Wicked ſhall periſh.*] At the ſight of which the Wicked (who ſhall not be able not to obſerve it) ſhall be extreamly vexed; or rather furiouſly inraged: he ſhall pine away with Grief, Envy and Impatience, to ſee himſelf and his Companions diſappointed in all that they wiſhed; either of Good to themſelves, or Evil to the Righteous.

PSALM CXIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, with the Five *next which follow, the Hebrews call by the Name of* Hallel, *or* Hymn: *which they recited at their Table (as in the New Moons, and other Feaſts, ſo) in the Paſchal Night, after they had eaten the Lamb; concluding it with* Hallelujah: *which is the Title of this Pſalm (as of the two foregoing) to excite all* God's *People, eſpecially thoſe that conſtantly attended in the Tabernacle, to the Praiſes of* God's *good Providence; which extends it ſelf, as far as this Earth where we live: ſeveral Inſtances of which the Pſalmiſt here mentions.*

1. *Praiſe ye the* Lord. *Praiſe, O ye Servants of the* Lord, *praiſe the Name of the* Lord.] O Ye Miniſters of the Lord, and whoſoever you are that love his Service, praiſe his eternal Majeſty; be not remiſs in this heavenly Employment; but, with your beſt Affections, Praiſe the Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs of his eternal Providence.

Ver. 2. *Bleſſed be the Name of the* Lord, *from this time forth and for evermore.*] Praiſe him now in this preſent Age; and wiſh that thoſe incomparable Perfections of his, may be celebrated with the Praiſes of thoſe, that live in future Times, as long as the World ſhall laſt.

Ver. 3. *From the riſing of the Sun unto the going down of the ſame, the* Lord's *Name is to be praiſed.*] And not only here in this little Spot of Earth; but whereſoever the Sun ſhines, and lets Men ſee how ſplendid and glorious his Majeſty is.

Ver. 4. *The* Lord *is high above all Nations, and his Glory above the Heavens.*] For all the Nations of the Earth are his; and but a little Parcel of his ſupreme Dominion: which extends far beyond the Sun, and Moon, and Stars; whoſe Light is but a dim Reſemblance of the Brightneſs of his Glory.

Ver. 5. *Who is like unto the* Lord *our* God, *who dwelleth on High?*] Do not think that any of them (tho' worſhipped by other Nations as gods) is comparable to that great Lord and our moſt gracious God, whom we adore: for the very Place where his glorious Majeſty reſides, is far higher than they.

Ver. 6. *Who humbleth* himſelf *to behold* the things that are *in Heaven, and in the Earth?*] And it is a great Condeſcenſion in him, that he will have any Reſpect to the moſt illuſtrious of thoſe celeſtial Bodies: though he be ſo gracious alſo as to extend his kind and careful Providence, even to us who dwell upon this Earth.

Ver. 7. *He raiſeth the Poor out of the Duſt, and lifteth the Needy out of the Dunghil:*] Where among other manifeſt Tokens of his ſtupendious Goodneſs, he is pleaſed to take ſpecial Notice of thoſe, whom the World deſpiſes: and to raiſe them out of a mean, nay ſordid, Condition, to ſuch a Pitch of Honour and Dignity:

Ver. 8. *That he may ſet* him *with Princes,* even *with the Princes of his People.*] That at laſt they are advanced to ſit upon a Throne; and made the Governours of his own People: (1 *Sam.* II. 8. 2 *Sam.* VII. 8, 9. compared with 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 14.)

Ver. 9. *He maketh the barren Woman to keep houſe,* and to be *a joyful Mother of Children. Praiſe ye the* Lord.] And which is ſtill more ſtrange, he opens the barren Womb; (which according to the Courſe of Nature would have brought forth nothing) and makes a numerous Family ſpring from thence; to the great Joy of her that bears them, 1 *Sam.* I. 20. II. 21. Praiſe the Lord in theſe, and ſuch like wonderful Works of his.

PSALM CXIV.

ARGUMENT.

As the foregoing Pſalm puts them in mind of ſeveral Works of the Divine Providence, about particular Perſons: ſo this makes a brief Narration of ſome miraculous Works; wherein the Lord *declared his Power, when he brought the whole Jewiſh Nation out of the Egyptian Bondage.*

1. *When Iſrael went out of Egypt, the Houſe of Jacob from a People of ſtrange Language;*] When our Fore-fathers, with their whole Family were brought out of *Egypt*; and not one of them left behind among that barbarous People who had long oppreſſed them.

Ver. 2. *Judah was his Sanctuary,* and *Iſrael his Dominion.*] There was a moſt glorious Appearance of God among them; by that bright Cloud, the Token of his Preſence: which then had no other peculiar Place for its Sanctuary; but ſtood over the whole Camp of *Iſrael,* (*Exod.* XIII. 21. *Numb.* XIV. 14.) whom he then took for his peculiar Kingdom, (*Exod.* XIX. 6.)

Ver. 3. *The Sea ſaw* it *and fled; Jordan was driven back.*] At which Appearance the red Sea forſook its Chanel, and left a dry Path for them to march through: (*Exod.* XIV. 21, 24.) and ſo did *Jordan* alſo afterwards; to make Way for their eaſie Entrance into *Canaan, Joſh.* III. 15, 16.

Ver. 4. *The Mountains ſkipped like Rams,* and *the little Hills like Lambs.*] All the Mountains great and ſmall, which adjoined unto *Sinai,* trembled and leaped, like ſo many affrighted Rams, or little Lambs; before the ſame moſt dreadful Majeſty, (*Exod.* XIX. 18.)

Ver. 5. *What* ailed *thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddeſt? thou Jordan,* that *thou waſt driven back?*] To what elſe ſhall we aſcribe that ſudden Ebb of the Sea? and that, no leſs ſtrange, Retreat of *Jordan,* when it overflowed all its Banks?

Ver. 6. *Ye Mountains,* that *ye ſkipped like Rams;* and *ye little Hills like Lambs?*] What made the Mountains and Hills leap up, like affrighted Rams or Lambs; as if they would run away from the Place, where they were ſo firmly fixed?

Ver. 7. *Tremble thou Earth at the Preſence of the* Lord, *at the Preſence of the* God *of Jacob.*] But only the glorious Preſence of the Divine Majeſty, who was then bringing his People to the

the Reſt he had promiſed to give them. And let the whole Earth be afraid and tremble before that great LORD who hath honoured us ſo far, as peculiarly to be our GOD:

Ver. 8. *Which turned the Rock* into a *ſtanding Water, the Flint into a Fountain of Waters.*] And was ſo kind as to ſupply the Neceſſities of our Fore-fathers, even when they murmured againſt him, by a new Miracle: bringing out of hard Rocks, as hard as Flint, ſuch plenty of Water, as if they had been diſſolved into Lakes or Rivers, *Exod.* XVII. 8. *Numb.* XX. 11.

PSALM CXV.

ARGUMENT.

There is great Reaſon to think, that this Pſalm was made in ſome time of ſore Diſtreſs; when their Pagan Enemies began to boaſt and brag, as if their Gods were too hard for the GOD *of* Iſrael. *But by whom it was made, or on what particular Occaſion, there are ſo many Conjectures; that it will be no Preſumption to interpoſe mine: which is this: That when* Jehoſhaphat *ſaw that vaſt Army (which we read of* 2 Chron. *XX.* 2.) *compoſed of ſeveral Nations coming againſt him; and after his Prayer to* GOD *for Deliverance, was encouraged by a Prophet to hope for it; (Ver.* 14, 15.) *and had by the Levites given him Thanks for this Hope; he, or that Prophet, compoſed this Hymn, to quicken and confirm their Faith in God: unto which you read he exhorted them, Ver.* 20. *And it is likely that this was the Hymn which, by common Conſent the Singers were appointed to uſe, when they went out to encounter thoſe Enemies: ſaying not only thoſe Words, which we read there, Ver.* 21. Praiſe the LORD, for his Mercy endureth for ever; *but theſe,* Not unto us, O LORD, Not unto us, but unto thy Name give Glory; for thy Mercy, and for thy Truths ſake, *&c.*

1. *NOT unto us O* LORD, *not unto us, but unto thy Name give Glory, for thy Mercy, and for thy Truths ſake.*] Proſper our Arms, O LORD, and give us the Victory over theſe Enemies that invade us: not that *we* may grow more famous; (no, we have no Thoughts of the Glory that will accrue to our ſelves thereby) but that thy Divine Majeſty may be honoured, and thy Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs to thy Promiſes be made the more illuſtrious.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore ſhould the Heathen ſay, Where is now their* GOD *?*] What a ſad thing will it be to hear the Nations that ſurround us inſult, not ſo much over us, as over Thee; ſaying, What is become of their GOD, in whom they truſted? If he be ſo powerful as they boaſt, why doth he not deliver them?

Ver. 3. *But our* GOD *is in the Heavens, he hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.*] Let them know that thou art infinitely ſuperiour to them, and all their Gods; being the Poſſeſſor of the Heavens, as well as the Earth (2 *Chron.* XX. 6.) whom no Power of theirs can hurt, or ſo much as reſtrain; but art able to do whatſoever Thou pleaſeſt, for their Confuſion, and for our Deliverance.

Ver. 4. *Their Idols* are *Silver and Gold, the Work of Mens Hands.*] Their Idols cannot hinder it in the leaſt; who are of no more Value, than the Silver and Gold of which they are made: and are ſo far from being the Makers of Things, that they themſelves are the Work of thoſe that adore them.

Ver. 5. *They have Mouths, but they ſpeak not; Eyes have they, but ſee not.*] They are mere lifeleſs Images; that have Mouths, but cannot give a Word of Advice, or of Encouragement and Comfort to their Supplicants: and Eyes alſo, but cannot ſee the Devotion wherewith they look up unto them, or proſtrate themſelves before them.

Ver. 6. *They have Ears, but they hear not; Noſes have they, but they ſmell not.*] Let their Worſhippers cry to them never ſo loudly, they cannot hear a Word: All the Frankincenſe and ſweet Odours which they burn to them, are merely loſt; for they cannot ſmell them.

Ver. 7. *They have Hands, but they handle not; Feet have they, but they walk not; neither ſpeak they through their Throat.*] Tho' they have Thunderbolts in their Hands, they feel them not; nor are able to do either Good or Harm: They cannot ſtir a Foot from the Place where they ſtand, unleſs they be carried; nor make ſo much Noiſe as a Fly; being utterly void of Breath, as well as of Senſe and Reaſon.

Ver. 8. *They that make them are like unto them; ſo is every one that truſteth in them.*] To what then, but to thoſe Idols, ſhall we compare the Makers of them, and ſuch as confide in them? who are mere Images of Men: having Eyes, but do not ſee that the Brutes are more excellent than ſuch Gods; and that the leaſt Help is not to be expected from them.

Ver. 9. *O Iſrael truſt thou in the* LORD: *he is their Help and their Shield.*] O ye *Iſraelites*, who by the Divine Favour are better inſtructed, repoſe that Confidence in the eternal LORD, which they do in thoſe Vanities: And he will not only protect and defend you, againſt all the Aſſaults of your Enemies; but help you to overcome them, 2 *Chron.* XX. 9.

Ver. 10. *O Houſe of Aaron, truſt in the* LORD: *he is their Help and their Shield.*] O ye Prieſts and Levites, do you above all others rely upon that eternal LORD; whoſe Praiſe you ſing, and to whom you offer continual Sacrifice; For he will never fail, not only to protect, but to aſſiſt all ſuch as piouſly confide in him.

Ver. 11. *Ye that fear the* LORD, *truſt in the* LORD: *he is their Help and their Shield.* And let all that fear the LORD and devoutly worſhip him, (of whatſoever Nation they be) place the like Confidence in his Almighty Goodneſs: For he will never forſake thoſe that depend on him alone, (though they be not of the Seed of *Abraham*) but defend them alſo in all Dangers, and aid them againſt all their Enemies.

Ver. 12. *The* LORD *hath been mindful of us, he will bleſs us, he will bleſs the Houſe of Iſrael, he will bleſs the Houſe of Aaron.*] We have had abundant Experience of his Care over us in all Ages; and therefore tho' now for the preſent,

our

our Enemies afflict us, yet let us believe that the LORD will do us Good, and bleſs us with a glorious Deliverance: All the Houſe of *Iſrael* ſhall ſee how kind he is; eſpecially they that miniſter unto him in his holy Temple.

Ver. 13. *He will bleſs them that fear the* LORD, both *ſmall and great.*] And he will not forget thoſe pious Proſelites, that are come to worſhip him there, as the only GOD; but, without any reſpect of Perſons, give them his Bleſſing alſo: which ſhall not be denied, either to Old or Young, to Rich or Poor.

Ver. 14. *The* LORD *ſhall increaſe you more and more, you and your Children.*] Nor will he grant you only a ſingle Bleſſing, by ſending a preſent Deliverance: but heap his Benefits, and multiply his Mercies upon you; and upon all thoſe that ſhall ſucceed you.

Ver. 15. *You* are *bleſſed of the* LORD, *which made Heaven and Earth.*] Ye are a happy People, who live under the Care, and Love, and Benediction, of that mighty LORD; whoſe Power nothing can confine: for he is not made (like the Gentile GODS) but himſelf created both the Heaven and the Earth.

Ver. 16. *The Heaven,* even *the Heavens* are *the* LORD's: *but the Earth hath he given to the Children of Men.*] In which he cannot be comprehended neither; for his Empire extends farther than you can ſee; to the Heavens, which are above theſe viſible Heavens: from whence his Providence reaches down, even to us the Children of Men; whom he hath placed upon this Earth, to admire and praiſe his infinite Majeſty.

Ver. 17. *The Dead praiſe not the* LORD, *neither any that go down into Silence.* And therefore will not ſuffer us to be rooted out, as our Enemies deſign (2 *Chron.* XX. 11.) for then the Earth would have none in it, to ſing his Praiſes: which the Dead who dwell in the ſilent Grave, cannot celebrate.

Ver. 18. *But we will bleſs the* LORD, *from this time forth and for evermore. Praiſe the* LORD.] But will continue us ſtill alive, that we may praiſe the Lord, and ſpeak Good of his Name, as we do at this time, (2 *Chron.* XX. 21, 22.) and leave thoſe to ſucceed us, who ſhall continue his Praiſes in all future Generations to the World's end. *Hallelujah,* Praiſe the LORD.

PSALM CXVI.

ARGUMENT.

I do not underſtand the Reaſon why Theodoret *applies this Pſalm to the Times of* Antiochus Epiphanes, *when it agrees ſo exactly to the Condition of* David *in his Flight from his Son* Abſalom, *(which ſeems to be mentioned* Ver 11.) *when* Achitophel *and others proved very falſe to him, and he had little or nothing to depend upon, but only the Goodneſs of the Almighty; who was pleaſed to plead his Cauſe, and deliver him. For which he reſolved to be very thankful, and to call all his Friends to rejoice with him, as I have expreſſed it* Ver. 13. *where the firſt Words ſufficiently declare the Senſe; but I have added more to explain the Phraſe, which is borrowed from the Cuſtom of thoſe Days: about which the Reader may conſult Mr.* Mede, *p.* 483. *laſt Edit. In this Reſolution he was ſo ſerious that he repeats it in the Concluſion; and ſaith he will pay his Vows in the midſt of* Jeruſalem: *from whence the Hiſtory tells us he was forced to fly in great Haſte, to ſave his Life,* 2 Sam. *XV.* 14. &c.

This ſeems to be the Occaſion of the Pſalm, which may very well befit any other Perſons, that receive any great Deliverance from GOD; *and accordingly I will order the Paraphraſe, and fit it for the expreſſing of their devout Affections.*

1. I *Love the* LORD, *becauſe he hath heard my Voice,* and *my Supplications.*] O How I love the LORD! He knows that I love Him exceedingly: and there is the greateſt Reaſon for it; becauſe He hath ſo graciouſly heard my Prayer, when in my Diſtreſs I cried unto him.

Ver. 2. *Becauſe he hath inclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon* him *as long as I live.*] I cannot chuſe, but mention again this Love of his, in granting ſo readily my Deſires: which encourages, and engages me, on all ſuch Occaſions, to addreſs my ſelf, with thankful Acknowledgments, unto Him; and to the laſt Breath of my Life, to expect Deliverance from Him.

Ver. 3. *The Sorrows of Death compaſſed me, and the Pains of Hell gat hold upon me; I found Trouble and Sorrow.*] Great was my Miſery; exceeding great; Death it ſelf, and the Grave were ready to ſeize on me; and I ſaw no Way to eſcape: nay, I my ſelf, in the Anguiſh of my Soul, inconſiderately caſt my ſelf into Danger.

Ver. 4. *Then called I upon the Name of the* LORD; O LORD, *I beſeech thee, deliver my ſoul.*] Yet I did not deſpond in theſe Straits; but made the mighty, wiſe and good Providence of GOD my Refuge; to whom I cryed, ſaying; O LORD, who waſt before all things, and commandeſt them as Thou pleaſeſt; reſcue me, I moſt humbly beſeech Thee, from thoſe Dangers, which threaten my Deſtruction.

Ver. 5. *Gracious* is *the* LORD, *and righteous: yea, our* GOD *is merciful.*] And it was not in vain that I cryed unto Him; for the LORD hath ſhewn me how ready He is to do Good, and how faithful in his Promiſes: and withal how gentle in his Puniſhments, and inclinable to pardon our Faults; which demonſtrates that no People ſerve ſuch a gracious Maſter as our merciful GOD.

Ver. 6. *The* LORD *preſerveth the Simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.*] I had periſhed, I am ſure, if I had relied only on my own Wiſdom, or the Skill and Policy of others: But the LORD was my hope, who preſerves the moſt ſimple and incautious Souls, when they commit themſelves to Him, and wholly depend on his Providence. I ought to ſay ſo; who was reduced to a moſt forlorn Eſtate, and then, by his Aſſiſtance, in a wonderful manner delivered.

Ver. 7. *Return unto thy reſt, O my Soul, for the* LORD *hath dealt bountifully with thee.*] What haſt

haſt thou then to do, O my Soul, who haſt been ſo tempeſtuouſly toſſed, but to ſettle thy ſelf again in Peace and Tranquillity; loving and praiſing the LORD, who hath very many Ways expreſſed his Bounty moſt liberally to thee.

Ver. 8. *For thou haſt delivered my Soul from death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from falling.*] For when the Dangers of Death ſurrounded me, Thou, O my GOD, didſt deliver me: whenever any Sadneſs ſeized on me, Thou haſt been my Comforter: and when I have been in Danger of Hurts, Maims, or Bruiſes (or of falling into the Hands of my Enemies) Thou ſtill haſt been my Protector.

Ver. 9. *I will walk before the* LORD *in the Land of the Living.*] I ought therefore, and I am reſolved to imploy all that Health and Chearfulneſs, that Soundneſs of Body and Mind, that Peace and Safety, which Thou haſt thus graciouſly beſtowed on me, in doing Thee (to whom as my Sovereign LORD I owe) all faithful Service; as long as I ſtay in this World.

Ver. 10. *I believed, therefore have I ſpoken: I was greatly afflicted.*] I had nothing, I will thankfully remember to depend upon, but only thy kind Providence: In this I placed my Truſt; in this I gloried to others, when I was in my greateſt Straits: for the Truth is, I was extremely miſerable;

Ver. 11. *I ſaid in my Haſte, All Men* are *Liars.*] Preſſed on all Sides with Dangers; from which when I fled as faſt as I was able, (2 *Sam.* XV. 14. XVII. 16, 22.) I concluded it was vain to rely on the Friendſhip and Help of Men; For they in whom I truſted proved ſo falſe and treacherous (2 *Sam.* XV. 31.) that I had Reaſon to think the reſt would deceive and fail my Expectation, when I was in the greateſt Need of them.

Ver. 12. *What ſhall I render unto the* LORD *for all his Benefits towards me?*] O the Greatneſs of thy Love! who even then didſt interpoſe and deliver me, by the aſſiſtance of ſome faithful Friends, who ſtill ſtuck to me! (2 *Sam.* XVII. 13, *&c.*) What ſhall I render unto the LORD, who heard my Prayer? (2 *Sam.* XV. 31.) How ſhall I ſhew my ſelf grateful to Him for this, and for all other his Benefits, which He hath heaped upon me.

Ver. 13. *I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the* LORD.] All that I can do, cannot make Him more happy: But, as my Duty binds me, I will praiſe the LORD, and ſpeak good of his Name, and give Him Thanks, in the beſt and moſt ſolemn manner I am able: I will call all my Friends together to rejoice with me, and taking the Cup, which we call the *Cup of Deliverance*, (becauſe when bleſſed and ſet apart, we are wont to commemorate the Bleſſings we have received) I will magnifie the Power, Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs of GOD my Saviour before all the Company; and will drink my ſelf, and then give it to them, that they may praiſe his Name together with me.

Ver. 14. *I will pay my Vows unto the* LORD, *now in the Preſence of all his People.*] And whatſoever I have promiſed Thee, O LORD, in the Time of my Diſtreſs, I will faithfully engage my ſelf to perform before them all: They ſhall ſee I am not forgetful of Thee, who waſt ſo mindful of me in my Trouble.

Ver. 15. *Precious in the Sight of the* LORD *is the Death of his Saints.*] As indeed Thou art of all good Men, whoſe Lives Thou preſerveſt as a precious Jewel: and wilt not give them up to the Pleaſure of their Enemies; nor ſuffer them to be loſt, but by thy ſpecial Providence.

Ver. 16. *Oh* LORD, *truly I* am *thy Servant, I* am *thy Servant,* and *the Son of thy Handmaid: thou haſt looſed my Bonds.*] Accept, good LORD, of theſe my Reſolutions; for I am ſenſible that I am thy Servant; every way thy Servant, and entirely obliged to be faithful to Thee: both by my Birth and by my Education; and by this marvellous Deliverance, whereby Thou haſt reſcued me from the Power of Death, which had, in a manner, taken hold of me.

Ver. 27. *I will offer to thee the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, and will call upon the Name of the* LORD.] I can never ſure prove ungrateful to Thee, unto whom I am tied by ſo many Bonds; But will always be making Thee my moſt thankful, ſolemn Acknowledgments for the Benefits I have received: And together with thoſe Praiſes, and Thankſgivings, wait upon thy Goodneſs, for the like Mercies in Time to come.

Ver. 18. *I will pay my Vows unto the* LORD, *now in the Preſence of all his People.*] I reſolve again, religiouſly to make good theſe, and all other my Vows, wherein I ſtand ingaged to the LORD: and that not only in private; but here at this Solemnity, in the Face of all his People:

Ver. 19. *In the Courts of the* LORD'S *Houſe, in the midſt of thee, O Jeruſalem. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] When they are gathered together at his Houſe, in the midſt of the holy City of our GOD; where they meet to worſhip Him, and to do Him Honour. There let them all join with me, to bleſs and praiſe the great Creatour and Preſerver of all things.

PSALM CXVII.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm (like the CX.) ſeems to be altogether Prophetical, of the Joy that all the World ſhould conceive, at the coming of the Meſſiah: *to give Salvation, firſt to the* Jews, *and then to all other Nations; according to his faithful Promiſe. Saint* Paul *applies the firſt Words of it to this Buſineſs,* Rom. *XV.* 11. *and ſome of the Hebrews juſtifie his Application; confeſſing that this Pſalm belongs to that Matter. The Brevity of it makes it the more remarkable; and eaſier to be remembred both by* Jews *and* Gentiles.

1. O *Praiſe the* LORD, *all ye Nations: praiſe him, all ye People.*] Let not the Praiſes, which are due to the great LORD of all, be confined to our Nation; but let all People upon the Face of the Earth praiſe Him: Let all Mankind ſing thankful Hymns unto Him.

Ver. 2. *For his merciful Kindneſs is great towards us: and the Truth of the* LORD *endureth for ever. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] For they are all concerned in his tranſcendent Kindneſs, which hath done mighty Things for us; and the LORD, who changes not, will never fail to perform his faithful Promiſes to the World's End. Therefore, let us all join our Praiſes to our common Benefactor.

PSALM CXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

There is nothing more probable than that David *compoſed this Pſalm, after* GOD *had ſettled him upon the Throne of* Iſrael *as well as* Judah; *and alſo ſubdued the* Philiſtines *(who hoped to have cruſht him before he grew too powerful,* 2 Sam. V. 17.*) together with other Enemies round about him, who, though they are not mentioned, yet, in all likelihood joined with them, as we may gather from* Ver. 10, 11. *of this Pſalm, compared with* 2 Sam. VII. 1. *For that it was written after he had brought the Ark to* Jeruſalem, *(mentioned there* Chap. VI.*) and placed it in the Houſe he had prepared for it; ſeems very plain from* Ver. 19. *of this Pſalm: where he begins to praiſe* GOD *in ſuch Words, as had not their compleat fulfilling till the* LORD'S CHRIST, *(whom the Jews rejected, and ſaid, He ſhall not reign over us) was made King of the World. For to Him* R. Solomon *himſelf acknowledges theſe Words,* The Stone which the Builders refuſed, *&c. are to be applied.*

And as the latter part of the Pſalm is a Prophecy of CHRIST, *in* David *his Type, ſo the former part may be accommodated to all Chriſtians: who, being perſecuted (as* Theodoret *ſpeaks) and tormented, and diſgracefully treated, by many Princes and their People, by Kings and Governors; got a glorious Victory over them all, after they had endured a thouſand Deaths.*

It ſeems alſo to have been pronounced, at firſt, in ſome ſolemn Aſſembly of all the People, met together to praiſe the LORD *for his Benefits. And it is the common Opinion of moſt Interpreters, that they all had a Part in this Pſalm. The greateſt Part of which was ſpoken by* David; *who begins with a Declaration how much he was indebted to* GOD, *deſiring all to aſſiſt him in his Praiſes: And then coming in a ſolemn Proceſſion, I ſuppoſe to the Gates of the Tabernacle, calls upon the* Porters, Ver. 19. *to open them to him, that he might praiſe* GOD *in his Sanctuary, which he doth in the very Entrance,* Ver. 20; *and then in the Courts of his Houſe,* Ver. 21. *After which all the People ſhout, and magnifie the Divine Goodneſs; in making him, who was baniſhed from his Country, their King,* Ver. 22, &c. *And then the Prieſts come forth, and bleſs both the King and People in the Name of the* LORD, Ver. 26. *and exhort them to be thankful,* Ver. 27. *And then* David *ſeems to take the Words out of their Mouths, and to declare that he will never be unmindful of* GOD'S *Benefits; deſiring all the People alſo to remember them,* Ver. 28, 29. *According to which Account of the Pſalm I have ordered the Paraphraſe.*

1. O *Give Thanks to the* LORD, *for he is good: becauſe his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] O make your thankful Acknowledgments to the great LORD of all the World: who, as he is the Author of all Good, and hath been exceeding bountiful unto us, ſo will continue his Kindneſs to all ſucceeding Generations.

Ver. 2. *Let Iſrael now ſay, that his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Let the Children of *Iſrael*, who have had ſuch long experience of his Love, and now ſee his Promiſes fulfilled; let them confeſs and thankfully acknowledge, that his Kindneſs continues to all Generations.

Ver. 3. *Let the Houſe of Aaron now ſay, that his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Let the Prieſts and the Levites, whoſe Buſineſs it is to attend upon his Service, confeſs now, and thankfully acknowledge, that his Kindneſs extends unto all Ages.

Ver. 4. *Let them now that fear the* LORD, *ſay, that his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And let all the devout Worſhippers of the LORD, of whatſoever Nation they be, join together with us, (for there is one LORD of all, who diſpenſes various Benefits to every one of us) and confeſs now moſt thankfully, that there is no End of his Kindneſs.

Ver. 5. *I called upon the* LORD *in diſtreſs: the* LORD *anſwered me,* and ſet me *in a large Place.*] You may ſee an Example of it in me, who was in grievous Straits and Dangers, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26. XXVII. 1.) but then imploring the Divine Protection, the LORD not only delivered me, but placed me in a ſecure Eſtate, free from all ſuch Moleſtation, 2 *Sam.* V. 3. VII. 1.

Ver. 6. *The* LORD *is on my Side, I will not fear: what can Man do unto me?*] For the LORD, it is evident takes my Part; and therefore, though I have many Enemies, I am not afraid of them: For, when he is for me, what Diſturbance can Men, be they never ſo powerful, give me?

Ver. 7. *The* LORD *taketh my Part with them that help me: therefore ſhall I ſee* my Deſire *upon them that hate me.*] It is ſufficient that the LORD, who hath done great Things for me by weak Inſtruments, is ſtill aiding to me: therefore I dare look the moſt malicious Enemies in the Face, and doubt not to ſee them turn their Backs upon me, (2 *Sam.* VIII.)

Ver. 8. It is *better to truſt in the* LORD, *than to put Confidence in Man.*] This is my Hope; and long Experience hath taught me, that it is much ſafer to rely upon Him, than upon the moſt numerous Armies.

Ver. 9. It is *better to truſt in the* LORD, *than to put Confidence in Princes.*] Far more ſafe to depend upon his Help and Protection, (who, as He can do what He pleaſes, and is conſtant to his Word, ſo never dies) than to confide in the Aid of the greateſt Princes; whoſe Mind may change, or their Forces fail, or they themſelves, on a ſudden, leave the World.

Ver. 10.

Ver 10. *All Nations compaſſed me about: but in the Name of the* LORD *will I deſtroy them.*] All the neighbouring Nations round about (*2 Sam.* V. 17, *&c.* VII. 1.) combined with the *Philiſtines* to inviron me; but by the Almighty Power of the LORD, I was confident that I ſhould hew them in Pieces.

Ver. 11. *They compaſſed me about, yea, they compaſſed me about: but in the Name of the* LORD *I will deſtroy them.*] Again they made a new Invaſion, and beſet me with ſtronger Forces, (*2 Sam.* V. 22,) *&c.* but ſtill, by the Almighty Power of the LORD, I doubted not, that I ſhould cut them off, and utterly defeat them.

Ver 12. *They compaſſed me about like Bees, they are quenched as the Fire of Thorns: for in the Name of the* LORD *I will deſtroy them.*] Though they were exceeding numerous, ſwarming about me like angry Bees, and flaming with ſuch Rage and Fury, as if they would preſently conſume me: yet it was but like the Blaze of Fire among Thorns, for by the Almighty Power of the LORD, I was confident I ſhould deſtroy them.

Ver. 13. *Thou haſt thruſt ſore at me, that I might fall: but the* LORD *helped me.*] They preſſed me exceeding hard, and, as one Man, conſpired with all their Might to throw me down from the Throne, to which I was advanced: But though they ſhaked it, and it was ready to fall, yet, by the Help of the LORD it was ſupported.

Ver. 14. *The* LORD *is my Strength and my Song, and is become my Salvation.*] To Him alone I aſcribe my preſent Happineſs, ſaying with our Fore-fathers in their triumphant Song, (*Exod.* XV. 2.) the LORD hath armed me with invincible Strength; he, and he alone, is to be praiſed, who hath given me a moſt glorious Deliverance.

Ver. 15. *The Voice of Rejoicing and Salvation is in the Tabernacle of the Righteous: the right Hand of the* LORD *doth valiantly.*] Which comforts the Hearts of all righteous Men; whoſe Houſes ſound with ſuch joyful Shouts of Praiſe for my Deliverance, as theſe; *The mighty Power of the* LORD *hath done moſt ſtupendious Things.*

Ver. 16. *The right Hand of the* LORD *is exalted: the right Hand of the* LORD *doth valiantly.*] *He hath made his mighty Power to appear to be ſuperiour to all other; for not by Man, but by that Power we have again and again obtained illuſtrious Victories over our Enemies,* 2 Sam. XIX. 9.

Ver. 17. *I ſhall not die but live, and declare the Works of the* LORD.] From whence I conclude, that I ſhall not fall into the Hands of thoſe that wou'd take away my Life; but ſtill prolong it to declare what wonderful Works the LORD hath done for me.

Ver. 18. *The* LORD *hath chaſtened me ſore: but he hath not given me over unto Death.*] Who hath let my Enemies have Power to afflict me very ſorely, but not to proceed ſo far as to deſtroy me.

Ver. 19. *Open to me the Gates of Righteouſneſs: I will go in to them, and I will praiſe the* LORD.] No, inſtead of that, he hath brought me to his own Houſe again, from which I was baniſhed, (*1 Sam.* XXVI. 19.) where I will return Thanks unto him: And therefore, O ye that miniſter in the Tabernacle, open the Gates at which the Righteous enter into the Courts of the LORD, that I may go in and make him my Acknowledgments, for bringing me from a moſt forlorn Condition to a Throne.

Ver. 20. *This Gate of the* LORD, *into which the Righteous ſhall enter.*] This is the Gate (which I behold and approach with Joy) that leads to the Courts of the LORD; at which the Righteous ſhall enter together with me, and hear me ſay;

Ver. 21. *I will praiſe thee, for thou haſt heard me, and art become my Salvation.*] *I will never ceaſe to praiſe and acknowledge thy Goodneſs, O* LORD, *who haſt graciouſly heard my Prayer, when I implored thy Help, and delivered me out of all my Diſtreſſes.*

Ver. 22. *The Stone* which *the Builders refuſed, is become the head* Stone *of the Corner.*] And let them bear a part with me in this my Pſalm of Praiſe, ſaying; *He whom the great Men and Rulers of the People rejected,* (1 Sam. XXVI. 19.) *as the Builders of a Houſe do a Stone unfit to be employed in it, is now become our King; to whom we muſt all join our ſelves, if we hope for Safety, in whom we ſee a Figure of that glorious King, who ſhall hereafter be in like manner refuſed* (Luke XIX. 14. XX. 17.) *and then by* GOD *exalted to be the* LORD *of all the World, and the Foundation of all Men's Happineſs,* (Act. IV. 11, 12.)

Ver. 23. *This is the* LORD'S *doing, it is marvellous in our Eyes.*] *This is the ſole Work of the* LORD, (*not the Effect of human Counſels, who oppoſed and obſtructed it*) *which ſurpriſes us with the greateſt Admiration, to ſee a deſpiſed Perſon become on a ſudden ſo renowned.*

Ver. 24. *This* is *the Day* which *the* LORD *hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.*] *This is the happy Day which the* LORD *himſelf hath made illuſtrious by his marvellous Work; and which it becomes us to celebrate with joyful Hearts, and with all outward Expreſſions of Gladneſs for ſo great a Benefit:*

Ver. 25. *Save now, I beſeech thee, O* LORD, *O* LORD, *I beſeech thee ſend now Proſperity.*] *Moſt humbly beſeeching thee, O* LORD, *to preſerve our King; and to advance and perpetuate his Kingdom, (eſpecially the Kingdom of* CHRIST, *which ſhall be welcom'd into the World with theſe Words,* Matt. XXI. 9, *&c.) It begins moſt gloriouſly; be pleaſed now, O* LORD, *to give it anſwerable Succeſs and Proſperity.*

Ver. 26. *Bleſſed be he that cometh in the Name of the* LORD: *we have bleſſed you out of the Houſe of the* LORD.] Which Acclamations of the People, let the Prieſts of the LORD meet with their Approbation, ſaying; *Bleſſed be the King which is ſet over us by the Divine Appointment; and bleſſed be all the People who live under his happy Government: We, whoſe Office it is to miniſter to the* LORD, *give you his Bleſſing from the Holy Place, into which you are come to worſhip Him.*

Ver. 27. GOD *is the* LORD, *which hath ſhewed us Light; bind the Sacrifice with Cords,*

even

even *unto the Horns of the Altar.*] *Who is the omnipotent* LORD, *moſt faithful to his Promiſe; who hath put an End to our Troubles, and made Peace among us: O be not ungrateful to him, but ſolemnize this Day with feſtival Joys; bind your Sacrifices with Cords, and bring them to the Corners of the Altar, to be offered as Teſtimonies of your Love and Thankfulneſs unto Him.*

Ver. 28. *Thou* art *my* GOD, *and I will praiſe thee; thou art my* GOD, *I will exalt thee.*] And ſo for my part, I am reſolved; who muſt own thee to be my moſt gracious GOD, and almighty Deliverer, to whom therefore I will make continually my moſt thankful Acknowledgments: to thy almighty Goodneſs alone I owe this Greatneſs to which I am promoted, and therefore I will never ceaſe to ſpeak the higheſt Things I am able in thy Praiſe:

Ver. 29. *O give Thanks unto the* LORD, *for he is good, for his Mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And let all good Men join together with me, and make their thankful Acknowledgments to the great LORD of the World; who, as He is the Author of all Good, and hath been exceeding bountiful unto us; ſo will continue his Kindneſs unto all ſucceeding Generations.

PSALM CXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm is contrived ſo artificially, that one would think, at firſt ſight, it was made after the foregoing; when GOD *had ſubdued the reſt of* David's *Enemies,* (2 Sam. *VIII.* 10.) *and given him Leiſure for ſuch curious Compoſures. For it is divided into as many Parts as there are Letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, each Part containing* eight *Verſes, and every one of thoſe Verſes beginning with that Letter, wherewith that Part begins. The Verſes, for inſtance, of the firſt Part all begin with* Aleph, *or A; and all of the Second with* Beth, *or B,* &c. *And thence this Pſalm is called in the* Maſora, *the great* Alphabet; *which is an Indication that* David *was now in a very ſedate Condition, under no extraordinary Motions, when he penned this Pſalm; but quietly conſidered Things, as they were repreſented to his Remembrance.*

But when we obſerve how frequently he mentions his Affliction, as lying actually upon him, now when he wrote theſe Meditations; it forces us to conclude that it was penned during Saul's *Perſecution: In which there were, I ſuppoſe, ſome quiet Intervals; (ſee Verſe* 54.*) either between the Time that* Saul, *(having his Life given him by* David*) reſolved to perſecute him no more,* 1 Sam. *XXIV; and his renewed Attempts to deſtroy him, upon the Information the* Ziphites *again gave him,* 1 Sam. *XXVI; or after* David's *freſh Demonſtration of his Loyalty to him, before he went to* Gath: *or while he was in that City, where he had liberty to meditate on the Excellence of* GOD's *Laws, and the Happineſs of thoſe that kept them; and the Comfort they were to him in his Affliction, which he found to be ſo ſweet and ſo great, that he begs of* GOD *little elſe, but that he might be more and more in love with them; which were already ſo much his Delight, that he mentions them under one Name or other in every Verſe of this Pſalm, none excepted but one,* Ver. 122, *or two at the moſt,* Ver. 90. *where he celebrating* GOD's Faithfulneſs, *which relates to the Stedfaſtneſs of his* Promiſe, *(called in this Pſalm his* Word*) it may well be thought to be no Exception to that Obſervation.*

I ſhall not be ſo curious as to examine the nice Difference which is made by ſome, between Laws, Statutes, Teſtimonies, Judgments, Precepts, *&c. becauſe they ſeem here to be uſed promiſcuouſly: or if there be any peculiar Meaning in ſome Verſes, I ſhall endeavour to expreſs it plainly in the* Paraphraſe.

Theodoret *hath a Conjecture concerning* David's *Deſign in this Pſalm, (both in his Preface to it, and upon* Ver. 157.*) which I ſhall mention, that the Reader may take his Choice.* David, *it is well known, had great Varieties in his Condition, for he both fled from Enemies, and chaced them; lived ſometimes very melancholy, and again moſt pleaſantly; ran in* GOD's *Ways, and ſtumbled, and roſe again to run that good Courſe. Now all theſe Things, ſays he (and it is not improbable)* David *afterward collected into this one "Pſalm; connecting all the "Prayers which he had made to* GOD *at ſeveral Times, and on ſeveral Occaſions, and putting them together in this admirable Meditation, divided into* 22 *Parts, which propound one and the ſame moſt profitable "Leſſon to all Men; and teaches them how "it is poſſible to live vertuouſly in the worſt "Condition. Nor doth he neglect dogmatical "Inſtruction, as he ſpeaks; but adds it to the "other: So that this Pſalm is ſufficient to "perfect thoſe that ſtudy exquiſite Vertue, and "to ſtir up the Diligence of thoſe that are "lazy, to comfort thoſe that are ſad; to correct the Negligent, and in one Word to "afford all manner of Medicines for the Cure "of the various Diſeaſes of Mankind. And, if it "would not have made this Book too big, I ſhould "have taken the Pains to ſhew the Deſign of "every Part in an Argument before it.*

ALEPH. PART. I.

1. *BLESSED* are *the Undefiled in the Way, who walk in the Law of the* LORD.] Happy, more Happy than can be expreſſed, are thoſe Men, who do not take the Liberty to live as they liſt; but, making the Law of the LORD their Rule, order their Life in an exact Conformity therewith.

Ver. 2. *Bleſſed* are *they that keep his Teſtimonies,* and that *ſeek him with their whole Heart.*] The ſtricter they keep to that Rule, (wherein he hath teſtified his Will unto us) moſt heartily ſtudying to pleaſe him; intirely devoting themſelves to ſeek his Favour in this way alone, the Happier ſtill they are.

Ver. 3. *They alſo do no Iniquity: they walk in his Ways.*] Eſpecially when they will not be tempted to do an evil Action, though it were

were to gain the greateſt Good in this World; but conſtantly adhere to him in the way which he hath preſcribed them.

Ver. 4. *Thou haſt commanded* us *to keep thy Precepts diligently.*] We are infinitely beholden to thee therefore, O LORD, that thou haſt obliged us to be ſo happy, by requiring us to uſe our utmoſt Diligence to obſerve thy Precepts, (which we our ſelves know to be good for us) with all Care and Exactneſs.

Ver. 5. *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes.*] O that I may ever be one of thoſe happy Men! I have no greater Wiſh than this; that all the Actions of my Life may be ordered and governed according to thy Will.

Ver. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy Commandments.*] Then ſhall I never be diſappointed of my Hopes, nor bluſh at the Crimes which are laid to my Charge; when my own Conſcience tells me, that there is not one of thy Commandments but is ever before my Eyes, as the Rule of my Actions:

Ver. 7. *I will praiſe thee with uprightneſs of Heart, when I ſhall have learned thy righteous Judgments.*] And is ſo dear unto me, that nothing can give me ſuch a Joy as to have learnt effectually how juſt and how good they all are; for which I will moſt ſincerely thank thee, as the greateſt Benefit.

Ver. 8. *I will keep thy Statutes: O forſake me not utterly.*] Deal with me according to the uprightneſs of my Heart in this Reſolution; that I will obſerve even thoſe Statutes, for which I ſee no other Reaſon but only thy Will. O do not abandon me too far; (1 *Sam.* XXVII. 1.) but ſtick to me, as I purpoſe to do to thy Statutes.

BETH. PART II.

Ver. 9. *Wherewith ſhall a young Man cleanſe his Way? by taking heed* thereto *according to thy Word.*] But how ſhall a young Man, ſuch as I am, (1 *Sam.* XXVII. 33. 2 *Sam.* V. 4.) in an Age that is prone to evil, be able to do as he reſolves? keeping himſelf ſo pure in all his Ways, that they maintain an exact Conformity unto thy Word?

Ver. 10. *With my whole Heart have I ſought thee: O let me not wander from thy Commandments.*] Firſt, I implore, with all my Soul, thy gracious Aſſiſtance; beſeeching thee to afford me ſuch a Meaſure of it, that for want of thoſe heavenly Supplies I may not be drawn aſide at any time from thy Commandments.

Ver. 11. *Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.*] Next, I have laid up thy Word in my Heart, as the moſt precious Treaſure; hoping that will be a Security to me, and preſerve me from offending thee, whoſe Promiſes are no leſs comfortable, than thy Threatnings are dreadful.

Ver. 12. *Bleſſed* art *thou, O* LORD: *teach me thy Statutes.*] And I know alſo, that thou, O LORD, art kind, and doſt not envy thy Favours to any of us, but wilt for ever be praiſed for thy Bounty towards us; and therefore I expect that thou wilt hear my Prayer, and enable me, effectually to learn thy Statutes.

Ver. 13. *With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.*] On which I have ſo much ſet my heart, that I have not ſpared to delare to others the great regard I have to every thing, which Thou haſt pronounced juſt, or condemned as unrighteous.

Ver. 14. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy Teſtimonies, as* much as *in all riches.*] I can ſafely ſay likewiſe, that I have taken more ſatisfaction, now that I am poor, in doing that which Thou haſt teſtified to be acceptable to Thee, than I ſhould in all the wealth of the World, were it heaped on me.

Ver. 15. *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have reſpect unto thy ways.*] I will ruminate alſo often on thy Precepts (which will be another means I truſt to preſerve me undefiled:) and never do any thing, but conſider beforehand, how it agrees with the Rules which thou haſt preſcribed me.

Ver. 16. *I will delight my ſelf in thy ſtatutes: I will not forget thy word.*] The ſtudy of thy Statutes (ſee Ver. 8.) ſhall be my delight: and I will not let ſlip any word of thine, but preſerve it in faithful remembrance.

GIMEL. PART III.

Ver. 17. *Deal bountifully with thy ſervant,* that *I may live, and keep thy word.*] Let theſe reaſons move Thee to deal graciouſly with me, who am devoted to thy ſervice: Render to me according to my integrity; and let not my enemies take away my life, which I intend to employ in doing whatſoever Thou haſt commanded.

Ver. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.*] For which end, I beſeech Thee to illuminate the eyes of my mind, that I may clearly diſcern the admirable wiſdom, which diſcovers it ſelf in thy Law.

Ver 19. *I am a ſtranger in the earth, hide not thy commandments from me.*] I am no better than a ſtranger in the Land, wandring from place to place, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 13.) and having no poſſeſſions: But do not let me want the knowledge of thy Will; and then I ſhall not think my ſelf deſtitute of an inheritance.

Ver. 20. *My ſoul breaketh for the longing* that it hath *unto thy judgments at all times.*] For which my Soul longs ſo vehemently, that I am not more broken with the hardſhips of my baniſhment, than with my continual labour and earneſt application of my mind, to have a full underſtanding of thy Judgments.

Ver. 21. *Thou haſt rebuked the proud* that are *curſed, which do err from thy commandments.*] According to which, Thou haſt already given a ſevere rebuke to thoſe haughty men, who, without any reſpect to right or wrong, perſecute and abuſe thy ſervant: (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 11, *&c.* XXV. 10, 37.) And the curſe which Thou haſt pronounced (*Deut.* XXVII. 26.) ſhall light on all ſuch men, as take the boldneſs to tranſgreſs thoſe bounds, which Thou haſt ſet them.

Ver. 22. *Remove from me reproach and contempt, for I have kept thy testimonies.*] And thereby remove from me that disgrace and shame, unto which they expose me as a Traytor to my King and Country: For I am not guilty of any such wickedness; but carefully observe thy Testimonies, (Ver. 14.) 1 *Chron.* XII. 17.

Ver. 23. *Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.*] Though the Rulers and principal Senators of the Kingdom sat in consultation how to ruin me, declaring me guilty of the greatest crimes; the only care of thy servant hath been to study how to behave himself unblameably according to thy Statutes.

Ver. 24. *Thy testimonies also* are *my delight, and my counsellors.*] Of which I have not been weary; but made the study of thy Testimonies my recreation; and never took advice of any other counsellors.

DALETH. Part IV.

Ver. 25. *My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.*] Consider therefore the forlorn condition wherein I lie, struggling for life, and utterly unable to help my self; and be pleased to revive and raise me out of it, according to thy promise, 1 *Sam.* XVI. 12.

Ver. 26. *I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach my thy statutes.*] Thou knowest both my manner of life, and all the dangers to which I am exposed; for I have ever laid them both before Thee, and found Thee ready on all occasions to assist and relieve me: And therefore I hope Thou wilt not now leave me; but more perfectly instruct me in my Duty, as the surest way to safety.

Ver. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.*] Give me such a right understanding, that I may ever be preserved in the way of thy Precepts: then shall I escape the snares of my enemies; and my ordinary discourse shall be, what wonderful deliverances Thou hast given me.

Ver. 28. *My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.*] Pity my sad condition, and now that my heart sinks under the weight of my affliction, support and strengthen me according to thy promise; that I may never take any undue course for ease and relief.

Ver. 29. *Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.*] Far be all fraud and falshood from me, whereby my enemies contrive to undo me: I desire not to learn any of their wicked Arts; but only beseech Thee to give me grace to observe thy Laws constantly.

Ver. 30. *I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid* before me.] That's the way I have resolved upon, to deal truly and sincerely; squaring all my actions according to thy judgments; which I have laid before me as the most equal Rule of my life.

Ver. 31. *I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O* Lord, *put me not to shame.*] And hitherto I have kept my resolution, and never started from thy Testimonies: Preserve me, good Lord, that I may not hereafter disgrace my self, by doing any thing contrary to them; nor be disappointed of my hope, by falling into the hands of those that seek my ruin.

Ver. 32. *I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.*] And when thou shalt have filled my heart with joy, by freeing me from those grievous straits, I will do thee better service; and be more forward chearfully to execute all thy Commandments.

HE. Part V.

Ver. 33. *Teach me, O* Lord, *the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it* unto *the end.*] Instruct me therefore, good Lord, more and more in the right way of serving Thee; and I will shew my self most thankful for it, by keeping exactly to it all the days of my life.

Ver. 34. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with* my *whole heart.*] Illuminate my mind to understand the excellence of thy Law: and then I shall not only observe it, but set my self to do it with a watchful, impartial, and most affectionate diligence.

Ver. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight.*] Be Thou my Leader and Guide; that I may not stray from the path of thy Commandments, wherein I find the greatest satisfaction.

Ver. 36. *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.*] Incline my heart alalways to seek its contentment in thy testimonies: and suffer it not to be drawn away by the desire of worldly goods; which, having no measure, is never satisfied.

Ver. 37. *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity: and quicken thou me in thy way.*] Help me to over-look those empty honours and fading beauties which we are apt to behold with too much admiration, and with lively affections and vigorous endeavours, to persist in the pursuit of thy favour, in the way Thou hast set before me.

Ver. 38. *Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who* is devoted *to thy fear.*] And at last make good thy promise to thy servant, (2 *Sam.* V. 2.) who fears to do any thing to offend Thee; though thereby he might win a Crown.

Ver. 39. *Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.*] Turn from me that disgrace, of which I cannot but be sometime afraid (1 *Sam.* XXVII. 1.) and must certainly suffer if I fall into my enemies hands, for thou wilt proceed, I know, according to thy own judgments; which are all equitable, merciful and gracious.

Ver. 40. *Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.*] I appeal to Thee, whether I have not a great zeal for thy Precepts; unto which I desire above all things to be conform'd: let me not perish there-

therefore in these troubles; but in much mercy revive me, according to thy faithful promise.

VAU. Part VI.

Ver. 41. *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O* Lord; even *thy salvation according to thy word.*] To those infinite mercies of thine, which moved Thee to make me such gracious promises, I betake my self: and beseech Thee to let me feel the happy effects of both in my deliverance.

Ver. 42. *So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.*] So shall I be able to put to silence, those that reproach me for my confidence in Thee: which they call a vain presumption; but is an humble reliance on thy own gracious promises to me.

Ver. 43. *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.*] Which till thou art pleased to fulfil, do not so far abandon me, as to let me be disheartened in asserting their truth and faithfulness, (which I am wont to oppose to all the threats of my enemies) for my whole dependance is on this, that Thou wilt not fail me; but pronounce a righteous sentence for me.

Ver. 44. *So shall I keep thy law continually, for ever and ever.*] And I for my part promise, when Thou shalt be so gracious to me, not to suffer my self to grow more negligent in thy service: but to be more careful than ever in the observance of thy Laws, to the very end of my days.

Ver. 45. *And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.*] For then I shall have no such incumbrances on me, as I now have in these straits and difficulties; from which when Thou freest me, I will do my duty with the greater chearfulness and joy: for it is not liberty, no, nor a Kingdom that I seek, so much as better advantages to fulfil thy Precepts.

Ver. 46. *I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.*] Which I will not be ashamed to justifie before the greatest persons in the world, to be the most excellent Rule of life, and the best Testimony of thy love to us: and will do it with such reasons, that they shall never be able to disprove me.

Ver. 47. *And I will delight my self in thy commandments which I have loved.*] Nor will I confute my self, by leading a voluptuous life; when I have liberty to do as I list: but as I have hitherto preferred thy Commandments before all other things, so then will I take the highest pleasure in them:

Ver. 48. *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved: and I will meditate in thy statutes.*] Not only in their study; but shew the truth of my love to them, by a diligent and zealous practice of them: which shall be the end of my meditation in them.

ZAIN. Part VII.

Ver. 49. *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*] Be pleased therefore in due time, to perform the promise, which thou hast long ago made unto thy servant, (2 *Sam.* V. 2.) and, when I thought of no such thing, given me an assured hope of it, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 11, 12, 13.)

Ver. 50. *This is my comfort in my Affliction: for thy Word hath quickned me.*] Which as it hath been the Occasion of many and great Troubles to me, so hath comforted me under them all: and, even when I despaired of Safety, revived my Spirit, and restored my Courage to Life again.

Ver. 51. *The proud have had me greatly in derision; yet have I not declined from thy Law.*] Tho' my insulting Enemies mocked exceedingly at my Hope, and, in the Pride of their Hearts, attempted by the most unjust Means to destroy me; it never moved me to imitate them, by taking any unlawful Method for my Preservation.

Ver. 52. *I remembred thy Judgments of old, O* Lord; *and have comforted my self.*] But I called to mind, O Lord, how, in all foregoing Ages, Thou hast suffered good Men to fall into great Calamities; thereby to render them, at last, the more illustrious: and with this Consideration also I comforted my self.

Ver. 53. *Horrour hath taken hold upon me, because of the Wicked that forsake thy Law.*] I have been seised indeed sometime with an horrible Fear, when I thought what sort of Men were my Persecutors: who stuck at nothing, which would serve their Ends; having no regard to right or wrong;

Ver. 54. *Thy Statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*] Yet in all my wandrings up and down, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 1, 2, 5. XXIII. 13.) I never tarried long in any Place, but I passed the Time delightfully, in composing some such Song as this in praise of thy Statutes.

Ver. 55. *I have remembred thy Name, O* Lord, *in the Night, and have kept thy Law.*] When others were asleep, I was calling to mind, how good, how powerful, and how faithful Thou art: and resolving with my self still to observe thy Laws.

Ver. 56. *This I had, because I kept thy Precepts.*] Which make those so happy that obey them; that I ascribe this sweet Composure of Mind, and Chearfulness of Spirit, under all my grievous Afflictions, to my strict Observance of them.

CHETH. Part VIII.

Ver. 57. Thou art *my Portion, O* Lord: *I have said that I would keep thy Words.*] I have no Possessions in this World, (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 19.) which I see others greedily sharing among them: But I do not think my self poor, as long as I have an Interest in thy Love, and in thy Promises, O Lord; whose Words I have resolved to keep as the greatest Treasure.

Ver. 58. *I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.*] For there is nothing comparable to thy Favour; which I have besought with the heartiest Affection, and the most importunate Prayers:

Prayers: and do again beſeech Thee, to deal mercifully with me, according to thy repeated Promiſes unto me.

Ver. 59. *I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Teſtimonies.*] For upon ſerious Deliberation, what Courſe of Life it was beſt to take; I rejected all other, which with ſpecious Shews of worldly Advantages would have ſeduced me: and determine to be guided wholly by thy Teſtimonies.

Ver. 60. *I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.*] And being thus reſolved, I admitted no farther Debate about it; but inſtantly, without any Delay, ſet my ſelf to the ſtrict Obſervance of thy Commandments.

Ver. 61. *The Bands of the Wicked have robbed me:* but *I have not forgotten thy Law.*] Nor hath any Thing been able to remove me from this Reſolution; but, though I have been beſet with Troops of wicked Men, who ſtript me of all I had, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26.) it did not make me forget my Duty; nor put me upon any unlawful Means of being revenged of them: (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 6, 7.)

Ver. 62. *At Mid-night I will riſe to give Thanks unto thee: becauſe of thy righteous Judgments.*] But have bleſſed Thee, both Night and Day, and aroſe at Mid-night to give Thee Thanks; for thoſe juſt and good Laws, which Thou haſt taught me to obſerve.

Ver. 63. I am *a Companion of all* them *that fear thee, and of them that keep thy Precepts.*] Aſſociating my ſelf willingly, with none but ſuch as fear to offend Thee; and do religiouſly obſerve thy Precepts: who are all truly dear unto me.

Ver. 64. *The Earth, O* LORD, *is full of thy Mercy: teach me thy Statutes.*] And no other Thing do I deſire of Thee, O LORD, whoſe Kindneſs is ſo great that it diſpenſes its bleſſing plentifully throughout all the Earth, but that Thou wilt inſtruct me ſtill to ſerve Thee as I ought.

TETH. PART IX.

Ver. 65. *Thou haſt dealt well with thy Servant, O* LORD, *according unto thy Word.*] Many other Benefits, I will thankfully acknowledge, O LORD, Thou haſt beſtowed upon thy Servant: with whom Thou haſt faithfully kept thy Word.

Ver. 66. *Teach me good Judgment and Knowledge; for I have believed thy Commandments.*] And I am not ignorant of thy Commandments, which, by thy Grace, I have believed to be the only Way to Happineſs: but ſtill I need thy farther Aſſiſtance, to give me a delightful Taſte and thorough Senſe of what I know; which I beſeech Thee add to the reſt of the Benefits I have received from Thee.

Ver. 67. *Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray: but now have I kept thy Word.*] And if it be neceſſary for this End, to deprive me ſtill of all other Delights, I ſubmit unto it: for I muſt confeſs I committed many Errors before I was thus afflicted; which ſince I have corrected, and grown more ſtrictly obſervant of thy Word.

Ver. 68. *Thou* art *good and doeſt good; teach me thy Statutes.*] Thou art in thy own Nature kind and good; and nothing elſe can proceed from Thee, who deſigneſt our Good even when Thou afflicteſt us: Take what Methods Thou pleaſeſt with me; only teach me effectually, to do as Thou wouldeſt have me.

Ver. 69. *The Proud have forged a Lie againſt me:* but *I will keep thy Precepts with* my *whole Heart.*] They that diſdain to be tied to the common and plain Rules of Honeſty, have taken a great deal of Pains to invent a Lie againſt me; (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 9.) but as I am hitherto conſcious of no ſuch Guilt, ſo I will always confute them by an impartial and moſt hearty Obſervance of thy Precepts.

Ver. 70. *Their heart is as fat as greaſe,* but *I delight in thy Law.*] Which give me infinitely greater Satisfaction in a poor ſtarved Condition; than all the dull Delights of Senſe, which they enjoy, in the fulleſt Plenty of worldly Proſperity.

Ver. 71. It is *good for me that I have been afflicted: that I might learn thy Statutes.*] This they ſtupidly imagin is the only Happineſs; but I can truly ſay, it was more happy for me that I was afflicted: for thereby I learnt to apply my ſelf more ſeriouſly to thy Statutes.

Ver. 72. *The Law of thy Mouth* is *better unto me than Thouſands of Gold and Silver.*] Whereby thy Will is declared unto us by a Voice from Heaven (*Exod.* XX. 1.) which I prefer before all the gold and ſilver in the Kingdom.

JOD. PART X.

Ver. 73. *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me: give me underſtanding, that I may learn thy commandments.*] Deſert me not then, who am thine own workmanſhip; that neither hath nor hopeth for any thing but from thy almighty Power: and deſires above all things to comprehend fully what thy Will is, that he may obey it.

Ver. 74. *They that fear thee will be glad when they ſee me: becauſe I have hoped in thy word.*] It will be a very great comfort and encouragement to all good Men, when they ſee me delivered out of all theſe Troubles: For thereby they will be confirmed in their belief of thy faithfulneſs to thy Promiſes; on which it will appear, I have not vainly depended, though I ſtay long for the performance.

Ver. 75. *I know, O* LORD, *that thy judgments* are *right, and* that *thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me.*] And I am ſatisfied, O LORD, that while thou makeſt me wait for the performance, Thou doeſt nothing contrary to thy juſtice, or to thy fidelity: but that all theſe croſs diſpenſations of thy Povidence, in the heavy afflictions which have befallen me, are perfectly righteous: and will only make thy truth and faithfulneſs, at laſt, the more illuſtrious.

Ver. 76. *Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindneſs be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy Servant.*] O haſten that happy time; when I ſhall ſee thy loving-kindneſs turning

this

this diſconſolate into a more comfortable condition: according to the promiſes which Thou haſt made unto thy ſervant, 1 *Sam.* XVI. 12. 13.

Ver. 77. *Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.*] Let me feel the ſpeedy effects of thy compaſſionate mercy; reſcuing me from thoſe that ſeek my life, and raiſing me out of this forlorn eſtate, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 14.) For howſoever I am repreſented, my higheſt ſatisfaction is in obedience to thy Law.

Ver. 78. *Let the proud be aſhamed, for they dealt perverſly with me without a cauſe*; but *I will meditate in thy precepts.*] Confound all thoſe proud Contemners of it, who, making no conſcience of what they ſay, have oppreſſed and overthrown me with lies and calumnies; as if I ſtudied to diſturb the Kingdom, when my only ſtudy is to obſerve thy Precepts.

Ver. 79. *Let thoſe that fear thee, turn unto me, and thoſe that have known thy teſtimonies.*] Let all pious men, who have a due regard to thy teſtimonies, be convinced of this; and be no longer abuſed by theſe ſlanders; but turn to my ſide, and become my Friends.

Ver. 80. *Let my heart be ſound in thy Statutes; that I be not aſhamed.*] And in order to it preſerve me ſo blameleſs before Thee, in ſuch integrity of heart as well as life, that I may not be aſhamed of the hope I have, that Thou and all good men will take my part.

CAPH. Part XI.

Ver. 81. *My ſoul fainteth for thy ſalvation: but I hope in thy word.*] For which bleſſing I have now attended ſo many years, that I am ready ſometime to faint away with vehement deſire to ſee thy long-expected promiſe fulfilled, of deliverance from all my enemies.

Ver. 82. *Mine eyes fail for thy word, ſaying, when wilt thou comfort me?*] That joyful ſight I have looked for, till I am in danger to be weary with expectation; ſaying, when will the time come of my deliverance from this diſconſolate condition?

Ver. 83. *For I am become like a bottle in the ſmoke: yet do I not forget thy ſtatutes.*] I hope it will not be long delayed; for I am worn away, and my skin, (like an empty leathern bag, that hath hung a great while in the ſmoke) is ſhrivelled up with toil and grief: and yet I have never taken any unlawful courſe, to rid my ſelf of all this miſery.

Ver. 84. *How many are the days of thy ſervant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that perſecute me?*] I leave that to Thee, O Lord; beſeeching Thee to conſider how my days ſpend apace in trouble and ſorrow: which force me to ſigh and ſay; How long muſt thy poor ſervant ſtill lie in this calamitous condition? O when wilt Thou do me right againſt my perſecutors?

Ver. 85. *The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.*] Who proudly contrive by all manner of frauds and treachery to take away my life, directly contrary to thy Law; to which they are as injurious as unto me.

Ver. 86. *All thy commandments are faithful; they perſecute me wrongfully; help thou me.*] For all thy Commandments teach us to be juſt and true; being as faithful, as thoſe men are falſe and perfidious: therefore make good thy promiſes to me; and deliver me from thoſe who perſecute me with lies and forgeries.

Ver. 87. *They had almoſt conſumed me upon earth: but I forſook not thy precepts.*] Which they have employed ſo ſucceſsfully, that I eſcaped very hardly with my life, when I was in the Land of *Judah*; (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26.) and yet for all this I ſtuck to thy Precepts; and would not take away the Life of him that ſought mine, when I could have eaſily done it, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 6, 7.

Ver. 88. *Quicken me after thy loving kindneſs, ſo ſhall I keep the teſtimony of thy mouth.*] Deal as kindly with me, O Lord; and not only ſpare my life, but raiſe me out of this forlorn eſtate, wherein I lie, like a man that is dead; (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 14.) and I will endeavour the more carefully to obſerve the Teſtimonies which Thou haſt ſolemnly (Verſ. 72.) given us in charge.

LAMED. Part XII.

Ver. 89. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is ſettled in heaven.*] Thou art eternal, O Lord, and changeſt not; and thy promiſes are like thy ſelf, fixed and ſettled in the heavens; which are a lively emblem of their conſtancy, and unvariable truth.

Ver. 90. *Thy faithfulneſs is unto all generations, thou haſt eſtabliſhed the earth, and it abideth.*] One generation goes, and another comes; but thy fidelity is ſtill the ſame to all: and alters no more than the earth; which thou haſt firmly and immoveably eſtabliſhed, while all thoſe creatures that live upon it, paſs away and periſh.

Ver. 91. *They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy ſervants.*] All things remain to this day in the order at firſt appointed: and never vary from the Laws which Thou haſt ſet them: for they are entirely ſubject to thy will and pleaſure.

Ver. 92. *Unleſs thy law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.*] Which was a moſt comfortable Meditation in my afflicted condition: when my heart would have failed me, and I ſhould have been undone; if thy Laws (which ſtand as faſt as heaven and earth) had not given me conſtant conſolation.

Ver. 93. *I will never forget thy Precepts: for with them thou haſt quickened me.*] I will never therefore be guilty of neglecting thy Precepts: which have revived me, (by thy faithful promiſes Thou haſt annexed to the obſervance of them) when I looked upon my ſelf as a dead man, that could not eſcape the hands of thoſe that ſought to deſtroy me.

Ver. 94. *I am thine: ſave me, for I have ſought thy precepts.*] And be Thou pleaſed ſtill to deliver me from falling into their hands: For

though they have driven me from thy inheritance (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 19.) I ſtill continue thine, and ſerve no other GOD; but have diligently enquired, in my greateſt dangers, what would be moſt pleaſing to Thee, as moſt advantageous to my ſelf.

Ver. 95. *The wicked have waited for me to deſtroy me: but I will conſider thy teſtimonies.*] Thoſe wicked men who are combined to deſtroy me, have long watched for an opportunity which they confidently expect to meet withal: but it doth not diſcourage my ſtudy of thy Teſtimonies; as the beſt defence againſt their bloudy attempts.

Ver. 96. *I have ſeen an end of all perfection*; but *thy commandment* is *exceeding broad.*] For had I greater forces than my enemies, alas! I never yet ſaw any thing ſo compleat, but as it had its bounds and limits, ſo it is exceeding frail; and when it is arrived at perfection, comes to a ſpeedy end; whereas the wiſdom which Thou haſt revealed to us, hath infinite ſatisfaction in it, durable and laſting ſatisfaction; which never fails thoſe that depend upon it.

MEM. PART XIII.

Ver. 97. *O how love I thy law! it* is *my meditation all the day.*] It is impoſſible to expreſs the love I have to thy Law: which entertains my Meditation, or enables me to entertain others, with admirable variety, whole days together.

Ver. 98. *Thou through thy commandments haſt made me wiſer then mine enemies: for they* are *ever with me.*] Mine enemies are very crafty, and uſe many artifices to deſtroy me: but by obſerving thy Commandments, I have defeated all their ſubtil devices; and confounded them, even by refuſing (becauſe thy Commandments, which are ever before my eyes, reſtrain me) to be avenged on them, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 17, 18, &c. XXVI. 21.

Ver. 99. *I have more underſtanding than all my teachers: for thy teſtimonies* are *my meditation.*] I have outſtripped all the Doctors of the Law, of whom I formerly learnt; and underſtand more perfectly than they, the beſt means of ſecuring my ſelf: becauſe my mind is ſtill employed in thy Teſtimoniss, as the Rule of all my deſigns and undertakings.

Ver. 100. *I underſtand more than the ancients: becauſe I keep thy precepts.*] Though I am but young, yet I have more underſtanding in things, than the Judges and grave privy Counſellors; becauſe my Maxim is, ſtrictly to obſerve thy Precepts.

Ver. 101. *I have refrained my feet from every evil way: that I might keep thy word.*] Whatſoever advantage it promiſed me, I have never proceeded in any evil courſe to obtain my end: but refuſed the ſeeming gain; that I might not offend againſt thy Word.

Ver. 102. *I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou haſt taught me.*] My reſpect to thee hath hindred me from doing any injury unto others: becauſe I know thou art the Author of thoſe Laws which forbid it; and in the obſervance of them, I have learnt, conſiſts my happineſs.

Ver. 103. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte! yea, ſweeter than honey to my mouth.*] And a happineſs it is, I feel already, incomparably above all other: the pleaſure I take in every word of thine, is inexpreſſibly far to be preferred before all the delights of ſenſe, though never ſo ſweet and luſcious.

Ver. 104. *Through thy precepts I get underſtanding: therefore I hate every falſe way.*] And by thy Precepts I am ſo fully inſtructed how to behave my ſelf, that I need not to betake my ſelf to any diſhoneſt ways, which I utterly abhor.

NUN. PART XIV.

Ver. 105. *Thy word* is *a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*] Thy word is my only Guide; whoſe directions I follow in all the dark and difficult Paſſages of my Life.

Ver. 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform* it, *that I will keep thy righteous judgments.*] I have ſolemnly reſolved, and bound my ſelf by the moſt ſacred ties, which I will never break but do now confirm; that I will carefully obſerve thy Decrees, which I find to be both juſt and good.

Ver. 107. *I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O* LORD, *according unto thy word.*] I have ſuffered very much upon that account, and am ſtill ſorely afflicted: But I comfort my ſelf, O LORD, with thy Promiſe, according to which I beſeech Thee to deliver me from thoſe that ſeek to deſtroy me; and raiſe me out of this forlorn condition, wherein I can ſcarce be ſaid to live.

Ver. 108. *Accept, I beſeech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O* LORD, *and teach me thy judgments.*] I have no other ſacrifices that I am able in this exile to offer to Thee, but theſe of Prayer, and thankful acknowledgments, and vows of ſincere and chearful Obedience; with which I do moſt freely and heartily preſent thee, O LORD: beſeeching Thee to teach me ſtill more effectually thy Judgments; that I may never fail to be conformed to thy will.

Ver. 109. *My ſoul* is *continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.*] To which I have hitherto ſo cloſely adhered, that tho' I go in continual danger of my life, (*Judg.* XII. 3.) it doth not move me in the leaſt (whatſoever ſhifts I am forced to make) to ſave my ſelf by forſaking thy Law.

Ver. 110. *The wicked have laid a ſnare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.*] They that make no conſcience of their actions, have contrived a ſubtil plot to ruin me: But I have never ſtepped out of the way of thy Precepts, to avoid the ſnares they have laid for me.

Ver. 111. *Thy teſtimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they* are *the rejoycing of my heart.*] I had rather alway continue as poor as I am, than do any thing againſt thy Teſtimonies; which I hold to be my chiefeſt good, and ſureſt poſſeſſion: out of which none can expel me; and which always yield me that inward ſatisfaction and joy which none can take from me.

Ver. 112. *I have inclined mine heart to perform thy ſtatutes alway, even unto the end.*] This infinitely outweighs all other conſiderations; and

and hath inclined my heart to resolve to do alway as thou biddest me, (whatsoever I may lose by it) to the very end of my days.

SAMECH. Part XV.

Ver. 113. *I hate* vain *thoughts: but thy law do I love.*] I hate all double dealing, and crafty devices, that are not warranted by thy law: to which I have resolved to stick with hearty affection.

Ver. 114. *Thou art my hiding-place, and my shield: I hope in thy word.*] In that way I will trust to Thee for safety and protection: having a firm hope that Thou wilt be as good unto me as thy word.

Ver. 115. *Depart from me, ye evil doers; for I will keep the commandments of my* God.] Do not persuade me any longer, O ye evil doers, to join with you; but get you gone from me: for I will follow none of your counsels; but strictly observe the Commandments of my God, who hath hitherto most graciously delivered me.

Ver. 116. *Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.*] And on whom I still depend, that Thou wilt support me, O Lord, according to thy promise, against all the assaults of my enemies that seek my life: and not let me be ashamed of the hope and expectation I have, that Thou wilt defend and deliver me.

Ver. 117. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.*] Be Thou my support in this weak condition, I humbly again beseech Thee: and then they shall not be able to throw me down; but in safety and security, I shall make thy Statutes my perpetual study.

Ver. 118. *Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit* is *falshood.*] They shall fall to the ground, and not I; for Thou art wont, I observe, to abase and lay as low as the mire in the streets, all those that presume to go out of the plain way of thy Statutes; for all their crafty tricks and crooked arts, on which they rely, at last prove false unto them and deceive them.

Ver. 119. *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth* like *dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.*] Thou castest all such wicked men out of the Land like dross, that is good for nothing, which makes me addict my self, with the greater love unto thy Testimonies:

Ver. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*] Trembling all over with fear lest I should by any disobedience to Thee, incurr thy severe displeasure; and dreading above all things thy judgments; which are threatned in the Law, and which I see executed upon the contemners of it.

AIN. Part XVI.

Ver. 121. *I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.*] This pious fear laid such a restraint upon me, that I never did any wrong to them, nor so much as dealt hardly with them, that now injure me: therefore suffer me not to fall into the hands of those who oppress me with their calumnies.

Ver. 122. *Be surety to thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.*] Their pride is great, and having power equal to their malice, they hope to prevail over me: But do Thou graciously undertake my protection, and be my security against the mischief they design me; that instead of being my ruin, their calumnies may turn to my greater good and advantage.

Ver. 123. *Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.*] I believe they will; but I have looked so long for that happy time, when Thou wilt deliver me (and yet am still in apparent danger to fall into the hands of my enemies) that I am almost tired with expectance of thy promise; though I know it is faithful and true, and shall certainly be performed.

Ver. 124. *Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy and teach me thy statutes.*] Pity my infirmity, and in much mercy send speedy relief unto thy servant; and in the mean time instruct me more perfectly in thy Statutes; that I may make the better use of that deliverance.

Ver. 125. *I* am *thy servant, give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.*] I am devoted to thy service, and designed by Thee to a high employment: enlighten my understanding therefore, that I may fully know my duty.

Ver. 126. It is *time for* thee, Lord, *to work:* for *they have made void thy law.*] For now is the time to do all I can for the Lord (who may be pleased then to take this opportunity to perform his promise) when wicked men not only transgress, but are so prophane that they reject, and would wholly lay aside thy Law.

Ver. 127. *Therefore I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine Gold.*] This inflames my zeal, and heightens my love to thy Commandments, which I value far more than all the riches in the world; which shall not tempt me to violate one of them, or suffer them, if I can help it, to be contemned by others.

Ver. 128. *Therefore I esteem all* thy *precepts* concerning *all* things to be *right*, and *I hate every false way.*] For the more I consider them, the more I approve every one of them, (as the exactest and best Rule whereby I square all my actions) and abhor all those base and dishonest ways whereby others study to advance themselves to riches and honours.

PE. Part XVII.

Ver. 129. *Thy testimonies* are *wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.*] I cannot sufficiently admire and extol the excellent wisdom also of thy Laws; whereby Thou hast testified thy will unto us; which makes me the more careful faithfully to observe them.

Ver. 130. *The entrance of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple.*] When a man doth but begin to be acquainted with thy Word, he finds his mind marvellously enlightened with such clear and useful knowledge, as directs the most simple people how to live happily.

Ver. 131.

Ver. 131. *I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.*] Which hath excited me to the moſt eager purſuit of this moſt excellent Wiſdom: for I longed to have a perfect underſtanding of thy Commandments, which at firſt ſight afford ſuch abundant ſatisfaction.

Ver. 132. *Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou uſed to do unto thoſe that love thy name.*] Favour my deſires, I moſt humbly beſeech Thee; and vouchſafe me the ſame grace, which Thou art wont to beſtow on thoſe that ſincerely love Thee; and ſtudy, as I do, thy honour and glory.

Ver. 133. *Order my ſteps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.*] And firſt of all enable me to walk ſteadily, according to the Rule of thy Word, that I may not be a ſlave to any ſin whatſoever.

Ver. 134. *Deliver me from the oppreſſion of man: ſo will I keep thy precepts.*] And then deliver me from the oppreſſion of him (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 24.) who unjuſtly ſeeks to deſtroy me; that I may have the greater liberty to ſtudy and obſerve thy Precepts.

Ver. 135. *Make thy face to ſhine upon thy ſervant: and teach me thy ſtatutes.*] Put an end to the troubles of thy ſervant, who is devoted to thy obedience; and for this reaſon, above all others, deſires to ſee better days, that he may have better opportunities to learn thy Statutes.

Ver. 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes: becauſe they keep not thy law.*] Which it is a very great grief to me, to behold ſo univerſally neglected; and hath coſt me many a tear, when I conſider, not merely the perſecution which I ſuffer, but how thereby my enemies violate thy law.

TSADDI. Part XVIII.

Ver. 137. *Righteous* art *thou*, O Lord, *and upright* are *thy judgments.*] I leave it to Thee, O Lord, to redreſs theſe evils; who art both juſt and good; and governeſt all things with an unerring equity.

Ver. 138. *Thy teſtimonies* that *thou haſt commanded*, are *righteous, and very faithful.*] For as all the Laws Thou haſt given us are perfectly righteous; ſo Thou doſt exactly and and moſt faithfully fulfil all the Promiſes or Threatnings which Thou haſt made to the Obſervers, or againſt the Breakers of them.

Ver. 139. *My zeal hath conſumed me: becauſe mine enemies have forgotten thy words.*] The conſideration of which moves my Indignation to ſuch a degree, that I am tormented to ſee my Enemies ſo forgetful of their own intereſt, as not to regard thy words.

Ver. 140. *Thy word is very pure: therefore thy ſervant loveth it.*] Which I know to be infallibly true, and perfectly free from all falſehood and deceit: which is the reaſon of that ardent affection thy ſervant hath unto them.

Ver. 141. *I* am *ſmall and deſpiſed*: yet *do not I forget thy precepts.*] Which will not ſuffer me, tho' I am mean and contemptible in the eyes of my enemies (who are honourable and mighty) to be guilty of neglecting any of thy Precepts.

Ver. 142. *Thy righteouſneſs* is *an everlaſting righteouſneſs, and thy law* is *the truth.*] For ſtill I think with my ſelf, that thy Juſtice, Goodneſs, and Fidelity are unchangeable; and whatſoever thou haſt ſaid in thy Law is the very Truth; upon which we may certainly depend, and never be deceived.

Ver. 143. *Trouble and anguiſh have taken hold on me*: yet *thy commandments* are *my delights.*] And therefore, tho' I am unexpectedly (1 *Sam.* XX. 3.) involved in very ſore ſtraits and difficulties; yet I do not forſake, but find great conſolation in the ſtudy of thy Commandments.

Ver. 144. *The righteouſneſs of thy teſtimonies* is *everlaſting: give me underſtanding, and I ſhall live.*] Eſpecially in this conſideration, (which comes often into my mind, *Ver.* 142.) that all the declarations thou haſt made of thy will to us, are ſo juſt and true, that they will never fail our expectation: O give me Wiſdom to order my life according to them! and then it ſhall not be in the power of my Enemies to make me miſerable.

KOPH. Part XIX.

Ver. 145. *I cried with* my *whole heart, hear me, O* Lord*: I will keep thy ſtatutes.*] I have beſought thy favour in this ſorrowful and diſtreſſed condition, with moſt vehement cries and hearty affection: Be pleaſed to reſcue me out of it, O Lord, and I promiſe with the greater care to obſerve thy Statutes.

Ver. 146. *I cried unto thee, ſave me, and I ſhall keep thy teſtimonies.*] I have made it my conſtant buſineſs to cry unto Thee for help; from whom alone I ſeek it: deliver me, I again beſeech Thee, and I will not fail to make good my promiſe of obſerving thy Teſtimonies.

Ver. 147. *I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, I hoped in thy word.*] I have ſent up early cries unto Thee, before the morning-light appeared: conſtantly expecting the performance of thy promiſe to me.

Ver. 148. *Mine eyes prevent the* night *watches, that I might meditate in thy word.*] Nor have I been leſs forward in the ſtudy of my duty, than in the imploring of thy mercy; but have awaked before all the watches were ſet, to meditate in thy word.

Ver. 149. *Hear my voice, according unto thy loving kindneſs: O* Lord*, quicken me according to thy judgment.*] Let my Prayer prevail with Thee, O Lord, for that favour and kindneſs which I have oft experienced; and preſerve my life, as Thou haſt done hitherto, by ſuch means as thou judgeſt beſt for me.

Ver. 150. *They draw nigh that follow after miſchief: they are far from thy law.*] I am cloſely beſet, Thou ſeeſt, and in danger to be ſeized (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 26.) by thoſe, who as they perſecute me, and ſeek my ruin, ſo care not by what wicked arts they compaſs their deſign: for they have no regard at all to thy Law.

Ver. 151. *Thou* art *near, O* Lord*: and all thy commandments* are *truth.*] My only comfort is, that they cannot approach ſo near to hurt me,

as

as Thou, O LORD, art to defend and preſerve me: and that all thy Promiſes annexed to thy Commandments (ſtill I think of that, *Ver.* 142.) ſhall faithfully be fulfilled.

Ver. 152. *Concerning thy teſtimonies, I have known of old, that thou haſt founded them for ever.*] This hath ever been my ſupport, long before I fell into theſe troubles; that whatſoever Thou haſt teſtified to be thy will and pleaſure, is firm and ſtedfaſt, and ſhall never fail thoſe that depend upon it, *Ver.* 144.

RESH. PART XX.

Ver. 153. *Conſider mine affliction, and deliver me; for I do not forget thy law.*] Shew then that thou doſt not neglect me; but art as mindful of me, as I am of thy Law in this afflicted condition; out of which I beſeech Thee to deliver me; for none of the Evils that have befallen me, have made me forget my duty to Thee.

Ver. 154. *Plead thou my cauſe, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.*] I appeal to Thee, whether I have not a righteous cauſe; beſeeching Thee to do me juſtice upon mine enemies, (*1 Sam.* XXIV. 15.) and reſcue me from their perſecutions: for I am in great danger of periſhing; but depend upon thy promiſe for my ſafety.

Ver. 155. *Salvation* is *far from the wicked: for they ſeek not thy ſtatutes.*] Far be it from Thee to afford any help to the wicked: for they have no regard to thy Statutes: but ſeek only how they may ſatisfie their own lewd and cruel deſires.

Ver. 156. *Great* are *thy tender mercies, O* LORD: *quicken me according to thy judgments.*] To which I oppoſe the bowels of thy compaſſion, O LORD; whoſe tender mercies are many and great: and will preſerve my life, I hope, according to thy wonted care over me, and kindneſs to me, *Ver.* 149.

Ver. 157. *Many are my perſecutors, and mine enemies:* yet *do I not decline from thy teſtimonies.*] I am not diſcouraged, either by the number or the ſtrength (which are both very great) of thoſe that perſecute me, with a deadly enmity: which doth not move me in the leaſt to depart from thy Teſtimonies (*Levit.* XIX. 18.) by ſeeking their deſtruction as they do mine, *1 Sam.* XXIV. XXVI.

Ver. 158. *I beheld the tranſgreſſors, and was grieved: becauſe they kept not thy word.*] It only provokes my ſorrow, to ſee that there is no faith, nor truth, nor gratitude in them, (*1 Sam.* XXIV. 17, *&c.* XXVI. 2.) and troubles me beyond meaſure, that they have no regard to what Thou commandeſt or forbiddeſt.

Ver. 159. *Conſider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O* LORD, *according to thy loving kindneſs.*] Such is the love I have to thy Precepts; which, I beſeech Thee, let the world ſee Thou doſt obſerve: and both preſerve my life, O LORD; and, according to the exceeding greatneſs of thy goodneſs, deliver me out of this ſad condition.

Ver. 160. *Thy word* is *true* from *the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments* endureth *for ever.*] As I doubt not Thou wilt; for none of thy promiſes have ever failed: but the very firſt of them, which Thou madeſt to our Forefather *Abraham*, (*Gen.* XII. 2.) hath been faithfully fulfilled; and ſo ſhall every thing elſe, which Thou haſt reſolved and declared to be thy will, be punctually performed to the end of the world.

SCHIN. PART XXI.

Ver. 161. *Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe: but my heart ſtandeth in awe of thy word.*] The Rulers and prime Counſellors of the Kingdom perſecute me, for pretended crimes: of which as I am not guilty; ſo I do not fear ſo much what they can do againſt me, as leſt I ſhould do any thing in my own vindication, againſt thy Word, *1 Sam.* XXIV. 6. XXVI. 9.

Ver. 162. *I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great ſpoil.*] I would not purchaſe my liberty, my peace, or the honour they enjoy, by any lawful Actions: for I take far more delight in doing thy will, and in what Thou haſt promiſed to do for me; than in the compleateſt Victory over all my enemies.

Ver. 163. *I hate and abhor lying:* but *thy law do I love.*] I hate all fraud and deceit; even to the degree of abhorrence and abomination: but moſt heartily love theſe honeſt courſes, to which thy Law directs me.

Ver. 164. *Seven times a day do I praiſe thee: becauſe of thy righteous judgments.*] It is the ſubject of my perpetual thanks and praiſe; that I have the happineſs to be acquainted with the juſtice and goodneſs of thoſe Laws, whereby Thou governeſt us.

Ver 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing ſhall offend them.*] The obſervance of which gives ſuch inward ſatisfaction, and brings ſo many and great bleſſings to thoſe who truly love them: that they take all things which befal them in good part; and nothing will tempt them to turn aſide, and leave thoſe vertuous paths wherein they lead them.

Ver. 166. LORD, *I have hoped for thy ſalvation, and done thy commandments.*] I have met with the moſt grievous diſcouragements: But, LORD, in the midſt of the greateſt ſtraits I have expected deliverance only from Thee; and never done any thing, for my preſervation, contrary to thy Commandments.

Ver. 167. *My ſoul hath kept thy teſtimonies: and I love them exceedingly.*] All my care hath been, ſtill moſt heartily to obſerve thy Teſtimonies: which I prefer infinitely before all earthly enjoyments.

Ver. 168. *I have kept thy precepts and thy teſtimonies: for all my ways* are *before thee.*] There is not one of thy Laws, of any ſort, but I have carefully obſerved; even then when I might have privily broken them, and been a gainer by it: (*1 Sam.* XXIV. 4, *&c.*) for I knew that nothing can be done ſo ſecretly, but Thou art perfectly acquainted with it.

TAU. PART XXII.

Ver. 169. *Let my cry come near before thee, O* LORD: *give me underſtanding according to thy word.*]

word.] As Thou art alſo with my moſt earneſt petitions; to which I beſeech Thee, O LORD, vouchſafe a gracious anſwer: and in the firſt place teach me, according as Thou haſt promiſed, to walk, not only innocently, but prudently, in the midſt of all the ſnares that are laid for me.

Ver. 170. *Let my ſupplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.*] Do not deny admittance to this humble ſuit; but in due time grant this farther requeſt: that I may, according to the ſame promiſe, be perfectly delivered from this long perſecution.

Ver. 171. *My lips ſhall utter praiſe, when thou haſt taught me thy ſtatutes.*] Then will I praiſe Thee without ceaſing: firſt for inſtructing me how to pleaſe Thee in all things:

Ver. 172. *My tongue ſhall ſpeak of thy word: for all thy commandments* are *righteouſneſs.*] And next for fulfilling thy promiſe to me: which I will loudly proclaim, with my thankful acknowledgments; that whatſoever Thou haſt ſaid is truly and faithfully performed.

Ver. 173. *Let thine hand help me: for I have choſen thy precepts.*] Let thy Divine power therefore ſuccour me, in this weak and diſtreſſed condition wherein I am: for I rely on that alone; having reſolved to be guided wholly by thy Precepts.

Ver. 174. *I have longed for thy ſalvation, O* LORD: *and thy law* is *my delight.*] And I have long expected, with moſt ardent deſires, thy help, O LORD, for my deliverance: delighting my ſelf, in the mean time, in thy Laws; while Thou art pleaſed to delay it.

Ver. 175. *Let my ſoul live, and it ſhall praiſe thee: and let thy judgments help me.*] O let me not periſh in theſe ſtraits wherein I am involved; but ſpare my life, according to thy wonted kindneſs, and I will ſpend it in thy praiſes: Send me relief, by executing the judgments Thou haſt decreed againſt my enemies.

Ver. 176. *I have gone aſtray like a loſt ſheep, ſeek thy ſervant: for I do not forget thy commandments.*] Who have ſo chaſed me from place to place, during this tedious baniſhment; that like a wandring ſheep, which hath loſt its way, I know not whither to betake my ſelf for ſafety: But be Thou pleaſed, like a careful ſhepherd, to look after me, and to put thy ſervant into the right way of eſcaping all the dangers to which I am expoſed, and of recovering my liberty, reſt and peace again: For, how hard ſoever my condition hath been (I can ſtill ſeriouſly profeſs it) I have not been careleſs in the obſervance of thy Commandments.

PSALM CXX.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

There can no certain account be given, why this and XIV. other Pſalms, which follow, are called Songs of degrees, *or* aſcents. *Their conjecture ſeems to me moſt probable, who think the Title denotes, either the* elevation *of the voice in the ſinging theſe Songs, or the* excellence *of the compoſure, or of the Muſick to which they were ſet, or the* high eſteem *they had of them upon ſome account or other; particularly becauſe they were ſo fit for their uſe (though moſt of them compoſed in former times) at and after their return from the Captivity of* Babylon. *Then, ſome think, this Title was given to them, becauſe they ſung them as they* went up *to their own Country again.*

But this preſent Pſalm ſeems to have been made by David, *when the calumnies of* Doeg, *and others, forced him to flee his Country; and to go as far as the* Kedarens *or* Arabians *(Ver. 6.) whoſe company was very irkſome to him. We do not read indeed in his Hiſtory, that he was there: but we may well think he ſought for ſafety in more places than are particularly mentioned; and might as well be there, as among the* Moabites, *and in the wilderneſs of* Paron, *(1 Sam. XXV. 1.) which was not far from them. As for* Meſech, *I take that to ſignifie not a place, but the length of time, which he ſtaid there, before he durſt ſtir from thence; or, which he was forced to ſpend in exile: as all the ancient Interpreters, except one, underſtand it. See* Bochart. *in his* Phaleg. *L. III. Cap. 12.*

1. *IN my diſtreſs I cried unto the* LORD, *and he heard me.*] I have had frequent experience of the goodneſs of the LORD; who, when I have earneſtly implored his help in my ſtraits and difficulties, hath conſtantly relieved me.

Ver. 2. *Deliver my ſoul, O* LORD, *from lying lips,* and *from a deceitful tongue.*] May it pleaſe thee, O LORD, ſtill to continue thy mercy toward me: and now that men ſtrike at my life, by calumnies, and cunningly deviſed lies, *(1 Sam. XXII. 9. XXIV. 9.)* to preſerve me from the danger into which they have thrown me.

Ver. 3. *What ſhall be given unto thee? or what ſhall be done unto thee? thou falſe tongue?*] O thou falſe Accuſer! what doſt thou hope to get by theſe ſpecious Tales which thou haſt forged? What will they add to that heap of wealth which thou treaſureſt up? *(Pſal. LII. 7.)*

Ver. 4. *Sharp arrows of the almighty, with coals of juniper.*] They ſhall be ſo far from turning to thy advantage, that they ſhall prove thy undoing: for the mighty LORD, (whom none can reſiſt) ſhall take a ſharp and a ſwift vengeance on thee; which ſhall never ceaſe, till it hath utterly conſumed thee.

Ver. 5. *Wo is me that I ſojourn in Meſech,* that *I dwell in the tents of Kedar.*] For it is but fit thou ſhouldſt ſmart for the miſchief thou haſt done; under which I groan moſt ſadly: not only in a tedious baniſhment from my own Country, but in that I am forced to ſeek for ſhelter among the barbarous *Arabs.*

Ver. 6. *My ſoul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.*] Where my mind cannot but perpetually reflect upon the implacable ſpirit of my enemies: whoſe bitter hatred will not ſuffer them to come to any terms of agreement.

Ver. 7. *I* am *for peace: but when I ſpeak,* they are *for war.*] As I never gave them the leaſt offence, ſo there is nothing that I more vehemently deſire, than peace and reconciliation: but

but when I make a motion for it, they are the more exaſperated; and, as if I diſtruſted my cauſe, or craftily ſought advantage by a Treaty, betake themſelves more fiercely and reſolutely to their arms.

PSALM CXXI.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

If David *was the Author of this Pſalm (and to whom can we with ſo much likelihood aſcribe it?) it is an expreſſion of the high truſt and confidence which he repoſed in* God, *when he was in great ſtraits, and ſaw no hope of humane help: being either environ'd by* Saul's *Forces, or purſued by his Son* Abſalom. *It is hard to ſay to which it belongs; but if by* hills *in the Firſt Verſe we underſtand* Sion *and* Moriah, *where* David's *Palace and the Ark of* God *were placed; then it muſt be referred to the latter: for* Sion *was not theirs, during* Saul's *perſecution.*

There are thoſe indeed, who, following Kimchi, *take the firſt Verſe to be a military form of ſpeech; and ſuppoſe* David *to have looked round about him, as a Captain in danger doth; to ſee if he could ſpy any aſſiſtance coming to him, down the neighbouring hills wherewith he was encompaſſed. But the other ſenſe ſeems to me more ſimple; which therefore I have followed: though, if we ſhould adhere to that conjecture, ſtill it will beſt agree to the diſtreſs into which* Abſalom *had reduced him. For then he might well look to ſee if any of his Subjects, continuing their fidelity to him, would appear to defend him. Why called* A Song of Degrees, *ſee* CXX.

1. *I Will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help.*] Though I am driven, not only from my own Palace, but from God's Dwelling-place, (2 *Sam.* XV. 14, 25.) yet my eyes ſhall be ever directed thitherward: from whence I expect a powerful aid againſt thoſe numerous enemies that are combined to deſtroy me.

Ver. 2. *My help* cometh *from the* Lord, *which made heaven and earth.*] I have no dependance on any other help, but wait for deliverance wholly from the preſence of the Lord: to whom all Creatures are ſubject, and who hath Angels at his command, to ſend to the ſuccour of his ſervants; for he made the heaven as well as the earth.

Ver. 3. *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not ſlumber.*] And methinks I hear his Miniſters calling to me out of his holy place, and ſaying, Fear not, ſince Thou haſt placed thy confidence in the Lord alone, He will not let thee be ſubverted: thou haſt a ſtronger guard than the moſt valiant Army would be to thee; for they may be tired and fall aſleep, but he that hath thee in his cuſtody will exerciſe a moſt unwearied care over thee.

Ver. 4. *Behold, he that keepeth Iſrael, ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep.*] Be confident of it; he that is the protector of all good men, will never in the leaſt neglect thee; much leſs abandon the care of thee: but, by a moſt watchful providence, keep thee in ſafety.

Ver. 5. *The* Lord *is thy keeper: the* Lord *is thy ſhade upon thy right hand.*] The omnipotent Lord of the World is thy Guardian: the very ſame Lord that covered your Forefathers with a glorious cloud (*Exod.* XIII. 21.) is always preſent with thee; to defend and aſſiſt thee, againſt all the enemies that aſſault thee.

Ver. 6. *The ſun ſhall not ſmite thee by day; nor the moon by night.*] Be not troubled that thou art forced to take up thy quarters in the open field: for the Sun ſhall do thee no hurt by its vehement heat in the day, nor the Moon by its cold and moiſture in the night, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 1, 6, 22.)

Ver. 7. *The* Lord *ſhall preſerve thee from all evil: he ſhall preſerve thy ſoul.*] The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all manner of harm: He will preſerve thy life, and not ſuffer thee to fall into the hands of thoſe that contrive to take it away, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 1, 2, 14.)

Ver. 8. *The* Lord *ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore.*] The Lord ſhall ſecure thee whitherſoever thou marcheſt; and proſper thee all along in all thy undertakings, either abroad or within doors: not only now, but in all future times, to the end of thy days.

PSALM CXXII.

A Song of Degrees of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Title ſatisfies us that David *was the Author of this Pſalm: who having ſettled the Ark (which before had no certain place) at* Jeruſalem, *and being, at this time, upon ſome occaſion in the Country, heard the good people there ſpeak one to another, as ſome of them did to him, of going to worſhip* God; *at ſome of the three ſolemn Feaſts. Which devotion of theirs, as it rejoiced his heart, ſo it moved him, I conjecture, to compoſe this Pſalm for their uſe, at ſuch times.*

If the Talmudiſts *may be believed, they were wont to ſing the* firſt *Verſe of this Pſalm as they went out of the Country towards* Jeruſalem, *carrying their firſt-fruits to the Houſe of the* Lord; *as the Law* (Deut. *XXVI.* 2.) *directed them. And when they entred within the gates of the City, they ſang the* ſecond *Verſe. There they were met by ſome of the Citizens, who, if this be true, ſang the reſt of the Pſalm, it is likely, together with them, as they went toward the Temple. Of this Cuſtom Mr.* Selden *treats L.* III. *de Synedr. Cap.* 13. *Of* A Song of degrees, *ſee* CXX.

1. *I Was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go into the houſe of the* Lord.] I was exceedingly pleaſed with the chearful devotion of thoſe who came unto me, before the approaching Feaſt, and ſaid, Let us go and pay our thankful Acknowledgments to the Lord, in the place where he dwells, and makes Himſelf preſent among us.

Ver. 2. *Our feet ſhall ſtand within thy gates, O Jeruſalem.*] Which motion ought to be the more readily embraced, becauſe now he hath fixed

fixed his habitation: and we need not travel farther than *Jeruſalem*, to enquire after the Ark of his preſence.

Ver. 3. *Jeruſalem is builded as a city, that is compact together:*] To *Jeruſalem*, I ſay, that fair and beautiful City; whoſe buildings do not now lie ſcattered and divided: but are all compacted, and united together (as we ought to be) in a goodly order, 1 *Sam.* V. 9. 1 *Chron* XI. 8.

Ver. 4. *Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the* LORD, *unto the teſtimony of Iſrael, to give thanks unto the name of the* LORD.] Thither all the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*, who own the great LORD for their GOD, go up from all the parts of the Country, by his ſpecial Commandment, (*Exod.* XXIII. 17.) to acknowledge before the Ark of his Teſtimony, (*Exod.* XXV. 21, 22.) all the benefits they have received from his almighty Goodneſs; and this above the reſt, that he thereby teſtifies his ſingular care and providence over them.

Ver. 5. *For there are ſet thrones of judgment: the thrones of the houſe of David.*] Thither alſo they repair for Juſtice; for the ſupreme Judicatory of the Kingdom ſits there, (2 *Chron.* XIX. 8.) and there is the ſeat of the Royal Family (where *David* and his Sons have their reſidence, and govern the People, 2 *Sam.* VIII. 15, 18.)

Ver. 6. *Pray for the peace of Jeruſalem: they ſhall proſper that love thee.*] O let this be part of your devout Prayers, when you come there; that GOD would preſerve *Jeruſalem* in peace: Happy ſhall they be, who out of love to the Religion and Juſtice which is adminiſtred in thee, (O beloved City) contribute their endeavours, as well as their Prayers, for thy ſafety and proſperity.

Ver. 7. *Peace be within thy walls*, and *proſperity within thy palaces.*] Let no enemy (this ſhall be my conſtant Prayer) approach ſo much as to thy out-works to diſturb thee: and let plenty of all good things abound within thy Palaces.

Ver. 8. *For my brethren and companions ſakes, I will now ſay, Peace* be *within thee.*] The kindneſs I have for my kindred, and my neighbours and friends, whether in the City, or the Country, will not let me ceaſe my earneſt Prayers to GOD, that he will confer his bleſſings on thee.

Ver. 9. *Becauſe of the houſe of the* LORD *our* GOD, *I will ſeek thy good.*] But above all, the love I have to the LORD our GOD, whoſe houſe is here, (whither all his devout ſervants reſort to worſhip him and celebrate his name) ſhall excite not only my Prayers, but my ſtudy to promote thy welfare.

PSALM CXXIII.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, it is certain, was compoſed in a time of great diſtreſs; when they were extreamly afflicted by ſome haughty and inſolent enemies, Ver. 3, 4. *who thoſe enemies were, there are ſeveral conjectures; And I will add mine: that this ſhort form of prayer was made by ſome pious perſon, when the King of* Aſſyria *(whoſe pride the Prophet* Iſaiah *deſcribes* VIII. 7. *and many other places) ſent* Rabſhakeh *and other of his Captains; to beſiege* Jeruſalem: *where they poured out moſt contemptuous, nay blaſphemous words, againſt* GOD, *and his people,* 2 King. *XVIII, XIX. It is probable, if this conjecture be admitted, that it was made by* Iſaiah, *whom* Hezekiah *deſired* to lift up *his prayer for the remnant that was left,* 2 King. *XIX.* 4. Iſa. *XXXVII.* 4. *Accordingly we read, (*2 Chron. *XXXII.* 20.) *both he and* Hezekiah *cried unto the* LORD: *and we may ſuppoſe, lift up his eyes to heaven, and ſaid theſe words.*

1. *UNto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the heavens.*] Though all humane help fail us in this ſore diſtreſs; yet I do not deſpair of relief from Thee, O LORD: whoſe Majeſty and Power, incomparably excels all earthly Monarchs.

Ver 2. *Behold, as the eyes of ſervants* look *unto the hand of their maſters*, and *as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her miſtreſs: ſo our eyes* wait *upon the* LORD *our* GOD, *until that he have mercy upon us.*) Behold, how not only I, but the reſt of thy faithful people, wait upon Thee: ſubmitting our ſelves to this ſevere puniſhment, as poor ſlaves do to the ſtroke of their offended Maſter or Miſtreſs; and reſolving to bear it patiently, till Thou our LORD who doeſt inflict it, wilt be pleaſed to ſhew thy ſelf our moſt gracious GOD; and in much pity towards us remove it.

Ver. 3. *Have mercy upon us, O* LORD, *have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.*] O be gracious unto us, good LORD, be gracious unto us; and in much mercy take away this heavy ſcourge from us: for we are become ſo beyond all meaſure contemptible, (2 *King.* XVIII. 23, 24. XIX. 34.) that we can ſcarce any longer endure it.

Ver. 4. *Our ſoul is exceedingly filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe*, and *with the contempt of the proud.*] We have a long time groaned under the intollerable load of the deriſion and contempt of thoſe, whoſe conſtant proſperity puffs them up with pride: nay, makes them inſolently oppreſs all thoſe, who are unable to reſiſt them.

PSALM CXXIV.

A Song of Degrees of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

If the Title had not told us that this is a Pſalm of David's; *I ſhould have thought it had been compoſed by the Author of the former; to acknowledge the wonderful power and goodneſs of* GOD *in delivering them from* Senacherib's *Army; which came in* like a floud, (Iſa. *LIX.* 19.) *and had overflown all the Country as far as* Jeruſalem, (Iſa. *VIII.* 7, 8.) *which might well make them be called* proud waters, *(as the Pſalmiſt here ſpeaks,* Ver. 5.) *becauſe they fanſied*

ſied nothing could ſtand before them. Such it ſeems were, either the Philiſtines; *upon whom, when they ſpread themſelves in the valley of* Rephaim, *the* LORD *broke forth* as a breach of waters, 2 Sam. *V.* 19: *or the* Ammonites *and their Aſſociates*, 2 Sam. *X.* 6, 15, 16. *Of* A Song of Degrees, *ſee* CXX.

1. IF it had not been *the* LORD *who was on our ſide, now may Iſrael ſay:*] If we had not had ſuch a mighty helper as the LORD; who took our part, may *Iſrael* now moſt thankfully acknowledge;

Ver. 2. *If* it had not been *the* LORD *who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us:*] If it had not been the LORD (whom none can reſiſt) who took our part, when ſuch numerous enemies united their forces, as one man, to make war upon us;

Ver. 3. *Then they had ſwallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled againſt us.*] They would then have made but one morſel of our ſmall Army: and in the furious rage wherein they were, have immediately devoured us; as monſtrous beaſts do their prey, which they greedily ſwallow down alive.

Ver. 4. *Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the ſtream had gone over our ſoul.*] Then they would have over-run all the Country like a violent torrent: and we ſhould have been buried in the floud.

Ver. 5. *Then the proud waters had gone over our ſoul.*] Having once made a wide breach, by the overthrow of our Army; they would have poured in more numerous forces upon us: till, like an inundation of water, which ſwells more and more, they had wholly overwhelmed us.

Ver. 6. *Bleſſed* be *the* LORD, *who hath not given us* as *a prey to their teeth.*] Thanks be to the LORD, to whoſe infinite mercies we ought to aſcribe it; that He hath not permitted them to domineer over us, and execute their cruel intentions againſt us.

Ver. 7. *Our ſoul is eſcaped as a bird out of the ſnare of the fowlers; the ſnare is broken, and we are eſcaped.*] They thought they had laid their deſign ſo ſtrongly, that we could not eſcape; no more than a little bird, which a fowler hath taken in his ſnare: but, bleſſed be the LORD, who hath aſſiſted our weakneſs; their plot is defeated, they are broken in pieces; and we thereby moſt wonderfully delivered.

Ver. 8. *Our help* is *in the name of the* LORD, *who made heaven and earth.*] This was not a work of our wit, no more than of our power; nor were we beholden to the help of any of our neighbours; but we owe it wholly to his almighty Goodneſs; who commands, becauſe He made, all Creatures: in whom we ought to place our confidence for ever.

PSALM CXXV.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

We may well look upon this Pſalm as a pious Exhortation to the people to truſt in GOD; *when* Senacherib's *Army threatned to deſtroy* Jeruſalem. *And perhaps theſe were ſome of the comfortable words, which we read,* (2 Chron. *XXXII.* 6, 7, 8.) Hezekiah *then ſpake to them; when* GOD *chaſtiſed them by that rod of his anger,* (*as He calls* Senacherib, *Iſa.* X. 5.) *which the Pſalmiſt here foretold* (Ver. 3.) *ſhould not long afflict them. Of* A Song of degrees, *ſee* CXX.

1. *THEY that truſt in the* LORD, ſhall be *as mount Sion*, which *cannot be removed*, but *abideth for ever.*] There are none ſo ſafe, as they that repoſe a pious confidence in the LORD: by which they ſhall both maintain themſelves in a ſettled Peace and Tranquillity; and remain for ever, as unmoveable, conſpicuous and illuſtrious as mount *Sion*.

Ver. 2. As *the mountains* are *round about Jeruſalem, ſo the* LORD is *round about his people, from henceforth even for ever.*] For as *Jeruſalem* is ſurrounded with high hills, which make it not eaſily acceſſible by any enemies; ſo the Divine Providence incompaſſes his people, who depend upon Him: to guard and defend them from all dangers; not only now, but in all ſucceeding ages, to the end of the world.

Ver. 3. *For the rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous: leſt the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.*] The power of wicked Tyrants indeed may heavily afflict the righteous for a time: but they ſhall not always harraſs their Country, nor continue their oppreſſion ſo long; as quite to tire out the patience of the rightous, and tempt them to forſake their pious confidence in Him, and lay hold on any means, though never ſo unjuſt, of obtaining deliverance.

Ver. 4. *Do good, O* LORD, *unto* thoſe that be *good, and to* them that are *upright in their hearts.*] To prevent ſo great an evil, be pleaſed now, good LORD, to deal well with thoſe who are truly good: and reward their fidelity; who notwithſtanding all theſe calamities ſincerely perſiſt in thy ways, and preſerve their integrity.

Ver. 5. *As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their crooked ways, the* LORD *ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity:* but *peace* ſhall be *upon Iſrael.*] But as for thoſe who, inſtead of growing better by theſe oppreſſions, decline more and more from the ways of piety; unto the moſt perverſe, and crooked courſes: the LORD ſhall deliver them over to be puniſhed with their oppreſſours; when *Iſrael*, after all theſe ſore afflictions, ſhall be ſettled again in peace and happineſs.

PSALM CXXVI.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT

This Pſalm is ſo univerſally thought to be a joyful Song compoſed by Ezra, *or ſome ſuch good man, when they returned out of* Babylon; *that I ſhall ſeek for no other interpretation. But obſerve,*

with Theodoret, *that when* Cyrus *gave them all leave to return to their own Land, ſome were ſo ill minded that they choſe to continue where they were: But ſuch as had any ſenſe of the piety of their Forefathers, and deſired to ſee the worſhip of* GOD, *according to the Law, reſtored, gladly embraced the opportunity of returning to their own Country. Where they thought themſelves ſo happy in the liberty which they enjoyed, that they pray (Ver. 4.) all the reſt of the Nation who remained ſtill behind, would come and partake of it.*

This is the moſt received ſenſe; elſe I ſhould have thought the deliverance from Senacherib *might be here celebrated: who had carried many of them captive, (*Iſa. *V.* 13, *and other places) and when they were delivered from his oppreſſion, they were indeed* like men that dreamed, *as the Pſalmiſt here ſpeaks. For awaking in the morning, and ſeeing his vaſt Army to be dead Corpſes, (*2 Kings *XIX.* 35.) *they could ſcarce believe, what they beheld with their eyes, it was ſo wonderful.*

And perhaps it was firſt made then, and afterward applied with ſome alteration, to their return from Babylon. *See* CXXXIII.

1. *WHEN the* LORD *turned again the captivity of Sion, we were like them that dream.*] To the LORD alone muſt we aſcribe this wonderful change; (which is like the ſudden recovery of health, out of a tedious and deſperate ſickneſs) For when the proclamation unexpectedly came forth, to give us liberty to return to our own Country, out of a long Captivity, (*Ezra* I. 2, 3.) we could ſcarce believe it; but were apt to look upon our ſelves, as only in a dream of ſo great a happineſs.

Ver. 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging: then ſaid they among the heathen, The* LORD *hath done great things for them.*] Which preſently turned our heavineſs into ſuch a heighth of joy, that it filled all places with our mirth; eſpecially with chearful hymns; in which the Heathen themſelves accompanied us, ſaying; This truly is the LORD's work, who hath magnified his power in the ſtrange deliverance of this Nation.

Ver. 3. *The* LORD *hath done great things for us: whereof we are glad.*] And truly ſo He hath (we ſhould be very ungrateful, if we ſhould not thankfully acknowledge the ſingular benefits which ſtrangers admire) the LORD hath not only reſtored our liberty, but declared the greatneſs of his power in this deliverance; which juſtly fills us with joy and triumph.

Ver. 4. *Turn again our captivity, O* LORD, *as the ſtreams in the ſouth.*] O that the LORD would be pleaſed to perfect what he hath begun! and bring back, in greater numbers, the reſt of our brethren that ſtill remain in *Babylon:* which would be as welcome to this deſolate Country, as ſtreams of water to the dry and thirſty grounds.

Ver. 5. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy.*] Then this ſmall handful of people, who are come to plant themſelves here again, and have laid the foundation of the Temple, with a great mixture of ſadneſs and tears, (*Ezra* III. 12.) ſhall ſhout for joy, to ſee ſo great an increaſe, and this pious work, by their help, brought unto perfection.

Ver. 6. *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with rejoicing, bringing his ſheaves* with him.] Juſt as we behold the poor husbandman, going to and fro with a little ſeed, which in a ſcarce Year he throws with an heavy heart into the ground, returning again and again from the field, with ſongs of joy in his mouth; when the harveſt comes to reward his paſt labours with a plentiful crop of corn.

PSALM CXXVII.

A Song of Degrees for *Solomon. See* CXX.

ARGUMENT.

The Hebrew Particle which here we tranſlate for, *is thought by our Interpreters, in moſt other places, to ſignifie* of: *and ſo they tranſlate it a little before, in the Title of* Pſal. CXXIV. *and a little after, in that of* CXXXI. *Therefore I ſhall look upon this Pſalm as compoſed by* Solomon; *who, you read,* 1 King. *IV.* 32. *made above three thouſand Songs: though none of them (except that large Poem called the* Songs of Songs, *and as ſome think,* Pſal. *CXXXII. and, as I ſuppoſe, the next to this) have been tranſmitted to poſterity, but only this: which is a Commentary upon a pious Maxim of his, often repeated in the Book of his* Proverbs; *that it is in vain to attempt any thing, if the* LORD *do not proſper it. Teaching us therefore in all our ways to acknowledge him,* (Prov. *III.* 6. *XVI.* 3.) *and not to preſume, that it is in our power* to direct our own way *(that is, our deſigns, enterpriſes, and actions) to what iſſue we pleaſe. For,* though a man's heart deviſeth his way, yet it is the LORD that directeth his ſteps, *Prov.* XVI. 9. XX. 24. XXI. 30, 31. *A Truth to be deeply pondered by all, eſpecially by Princes; in whoſe affairs, this over-ruling Providence is moſt viſible. Of* A Song of Degrees, *ſee* CXX.

1. *EXcept the* LORD *build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it: except the* LORD *keep the city, the watchman waketh* but *in vain.*] The ſucceſs of all our Undertakings depends ſo entirely upon the LORD's bleſſing, that it is in vain, by building Houſes and Cities, to enter into Societies, unleſs He proſper the deſign: and when they are framed, all the care of the Soldier and the Magiſtrate is to no purpoſe, unleſs His good Providence be their guard.

Ver. 2. *It is vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows:* for *ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep.*] And as fruitleſs, unleſs he favour it, is the toil and ſollicitude of you the Artificers and Tradeſmen in the City; who riſe betime, and go to bed late, and fare hardly: when they whom he loves (becauſe they

they own his Providence, and depend upon His Blessing, more than their own diligence) live securely, and want nothing that is fit for them; tho' they have no such strong guard of Soldiers to defend them; nor break their sleep with labour and care, to supply their necessities.

Ver. 3. *Lo, children* are *an heritage of the* LORD: and *the fruit of the womb* is his *reward.*] Observe it also; it is not in the power of the strongest and most healthful persons (though Nature designs above all things the propagation of Mankind) to have Children when they please, to inherit the riches they have got: but the LORD bestows them as freely as Parents do their estates; and makes those Women fruitful, whose pious reliance upon him, He thinks good to reward.

Ver. 4. *As arrows* are *in the hand of a mighty man: so* are *children of the youth.*] And yet there is nothing of which we are more desirous, than a numerous issue; especially in the flower and vigour of our youth; for they will be no less defence to us in our age, than arrows or darts are in the hand of a valiant Champion, to beat off his Assailants.

Ver. 5. *Happy* is *the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*] Happy is that Man who hath obtained so much favour of the LORD, as to have his house as full of them as the Champion's quiver is of arrows; they will undauntedly appear for him, to answer any challenge sent him by his Enemies *; or any accusation put in against him before the Judges.

PSALM CXXVIII.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

It is not unlikely, that this Psalm was composed by the same Author that made the former; to excite Men to be truly Religious, as the only way to obtain the blessings there mentioned, of the LORD. *Which as he there shews we must have from his free gift, and not think to acquire merely by our own industry: so here he shews the* LORD *is want to bestow on those, who, fearing to offend him, sincerely keep his Commandments.*

Some think this was a form prescribed to be used at the blessing of their Marriages: when they wished the new-married couple all manner of happiness; especially a long life in peaceable times, Ver. 5, 6. *Of* A Song of Degrees, *see* CXX.

1. BLESSED *is every one that feareth the* LORD: *that walketh in his ways.*] Whosoever thou art that desirest to be happy, be sure to add unto the devout Worship of the LORD, the practice of Justice and Charity, and all other Vertues: and thou shalt never miss of it.

Ver. 2. *For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy* shalt *thou* be, *and it* shall be *well with thee.*] For then he will prosper thy honest Labours; and give thee an heart also to enjoy the fruit of them: yea, this will seem no small part of thy happiness, that thou art able to live of thy self, and not be beholden unto others.

Ver. 3. *Thy wife* shall be *as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, thy children like olive-plants: round about thy table.*] He will bless thee also in thy Wife; and make her as fruitful as the Vine, which spreads it self, laden with full clusters, over all the sides of thy house; and in thy hopeful Children too; who shall grow up and flourish like the young Olive-plants, that are set in thy Arbour, round about thy Table.

Ver. 4. *Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed: that feareth the* LORD.] Observe it, that this shall be the comfortable portion of the Man that religiously serveth the LORD: who alone can bless our Labours; and continue the product of them in our Families.

Ver. 5. *The* LORD *shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see thee good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.*] Address thy self unto Him in His holy place; and the LORD shall bestow on thee whatsoever blessings thou askest of him: yea, may'st thou be so happy as to see *Jerusalem*, the Seat of Justice and Religion, in a flourishing condition, all thy life long.

Ver. 6. *Yea, thou shalt see thy childrens children,* and *peace upon Israel.*] And long may'st thou live, to such a good old age, as to see thy Childrens Children: and the whole Nation, all the time, in a prosperous tranquillity.

PSALM CXXIX.

A Song of Degrees. *See* CXX.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was made when some new Calamity threatned them: either by Sennacherib, *or as* Theodoret *thinks, by those Nations which combined to destroy the Jews, as soon as they returned from the Captivity of* Babylon. *When they were taught by* Ezra, *or some such holy Man, to recount what* GOD *had done for them ever since they were a People; and to denounce the divine Vengeance against those that now sought their ruin. The former conjecture seems the truer; because as yet, he saith,* Ver. 2. *their Enemies had not prevailed against them; unless we expound that Phrase, as I have done in the Paraphrase, (according to the received interpretation of the Psalm) that they had not quite destroyed them, and made them cease to be a Nation.*

1. MANY a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say.] Our Adversaries, may *Israel* now upon this occasion say, have very often, and very sorely distressed us; ever since we began to be a People.

Ver. 2. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.*] It is hard to number how oft, or to tell into how great straits they have reduced us, ever since we began to be a Nation: and yet, by the special favour of God, they have not

* See Theodoret.

not been able to compaſs their deſire of our utter extirpation.

Ver. 3. *The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.*] They have laid us ſometimes exceeding low; and not only ſcourged us ſo ſeverely, that the marks of it might be ſeen as plain as the furrows are which the Plow makes in the ground; but long continued alſo our vexation and torment.

Ver. 4. *The* LORD *is righteous: he hath cut aſunder the cords of the wicked.*] But the LORD at laſt, in much mercy, hath made good his faithful Promiſes, and broken in pieces the power of wicked Oppreſſors; that they might not always hold us under their yoke, and thus miſerably tyrannize over us.

Ver. 5. *Let them all be confounded and turned back, that hate Zion.*] And may all thoſe that ſtill hate us and our Religion, never have better ſucceſs; but be ſhamefully defeated, and forced to deſiſt in all their attempts upon us.

Ver. 6. *Let them be as the graſs* upon *the houſe tops: which withereth afore it groweth up;*] Let none of their deſigns ever come to maturity; but be blaſted like the graſs upon the houſe top, which having no root, withers of it ſelf; and needs no body's hand to pluck it up.

Ver. 7. *Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth ſheaves, his boſome.*] And as it lies unregarded by thoſe that reap or that carry in the fruits of the Earth; ſo let theſe men and all their enterpriſes become contemptible, and be looked upon as good for nothing.

Ver. 8. *Neither do they which go by, ſay, The bleſſing of the* LORD be *upon you: we bleſs you in the Name of the* LORD.] Let all their hopes ſo ſpeedily vaniſh, that there be none to favour them; nor ſo much as to wiſh proſperity to them: No more than there are gatherers of ſuch withered graſs appear, to whom the Paſſengers (after the uſual form, *Ruth* II. 4.) ſhould ſay; The LORD give you a good harveſt, We pray God you may reap the fruits of your labours.

PSALM CXXX.

A Song of Degrees. *See* CXX.

ARGUMENT.

Some think David *made this Prayer, after he had plunged himſelf into a very deep guilt, by his ſin with* Bathſheba. *I rather think, when he was perſecuted by* Saul, *and reduced to ſo low a condition, that his heart began to ſink within him. For* the floods of ungodly men *(as he ſpeaks,* Pſal. *XVIII.* 4.) made him afraid, *that he ſhould one day periſh in them,* 1 Sam. *XXIX.* 1.) *and he complains elſewhere,* that he ſunk in the mire, where there was no ſtanding, *&c.* Pſal. *LXIX.* 2, 14, 15.

In this condition he implores the divine Mercy with great earneſtneſs: and beſeeches him to pardon his ſins, and the ſins of all the people: which made them deſerve that ill government, under Saul *and his Flatterers.*

It is the laſt but one, of the VII penitential Pſalms.

1. OUT *of the depths have I cried unto thee,* O LORD.] In the greateſt ſtraits, when I can ſee no bottom, no end of my troubles, but I ſtill ſink lower and lower into them; I never deſpair of thy mercy, O LORD; but cry unto Thee moſt earneſtly to deliver me.

Ver. 2. LORD, *hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my ſupplications.*] Vouchſafe, good LORD, the Governor of all things, to grant my Petition: Do not reject it, I humbly beſeech Thee; but give me a favourable anſwer, when I deprecate thy diſpleaſure.

Ver. 3. *If thou,* LORD, *ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O* LORD, *who ſhall ſtand?*] I do not plead any merits of mine, but rather accuſe my ſelf before Thee; knowing that if I were the moſt innocent perſon in the world, yet if Thou, LORD, ſhouldeſt ſtrictly examine my life, and proceed againſt me, according to my deſerts, (LORD what would become of me?) I ſhould certainly be condemned.

Ver. 4. But there is *forgiveneſs with thee: that thou mayſt be feared.*] But Thou moſt graciouſly inviteſt us unto thy ſervice, by thy readineſs to pardon all thoſe that are truly penitent; without the hope of which, we could not ſo much as think of becoming religious.

Ver. 5. *I wait for the* LORD, *my ſoul doth wait; and in his word do I hope.*] This encourages me to wait and expect when the LORD will deliver me; my Soul is earneſtly bent to expect this happy time, which I believe will come; becauſe I have his Promiſe for it, on which I depend.

Ver. 6. *My ſoul* waiteth *for the* LORD, *more than they that watch for the morning:* I ſay, more than *they that watch for the morning.*] I direct my thoughts to the LORD alone for ſafety and relief; which I implore inceſſantly with my early Prayers: For they that watch in the Temple for the break of day; I ſay, the Prieſts that watch in the Temple for the break of day, are not more forward than I, to offer up their morning Sacrifice to the LORD.

Ver. 7. *Let Iſrael hope in the* LORD: *for with the* LORD there is *mercy, and with him* is *plenteous redemption.*] In whom let all his People place their truſt and confidence: for the LORD is very ready to do good; and hath more ways than we can imagine, to reſcue thoſe that hope in Him out of the foreſt diſtreſſes.

Ver. 8. *And he ſhall redeem Iſrael from all his iniquities.*] And he will at laſt free them from all thoſe troubles; which he hath inflicted on them, as a puniſhment for their iniquities.

PSALM CXXXI.

A Song of Degrees of *David.* *See* CXX.

ARGUMENT.

Though David *could not purge himſelf from all manner of guilt (as he confeſſes in the foregoing Pſalm, Ver.* 3.) *yet in that matter, which he*

was

was charged withal by his enemies (of affecting the Kingdom) he could safely protest he was as innocent as a little Child. Which he doth in this Psalm particularly; and in several parts of other Psalms.

1. LORD, *my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me.*] O LORD, I am accused of traiterous designs against my Sovereign, and of aspiring to the Throne wherein Thou hast placed him: But Thou, who searchest the hearts, knowest that I harbour no such ambitious thoughts; nor hath my behaviour betrayed any such intentions: For I never looked upon any man superciliously; nor meddled with affairs of State, or any thing else, that is above my place and calling.

Ver. 2. *Surely I have behaved and quieted my self as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.*] But have levelled my mind (else let me perish) to an equality with my condition; and resolved to acquiesce in the present state of things, committing my self unto thy care, and depending on thy Providence as a Child that is newly weaned, doth upon its Mother; just so, do I silence my natural desires; and am content to be disposed of as Thou pleasest.

Ver. 3. *Let Israel hope in the* LORD, *from henceforth and for ever.*] And let all good men, in like manner, modestly place their confidence and hope in the LORD, as long as they live; and choose rather to be depressed, than by any undue means raise themselves to greatness and honour.

PSALM CXXXII.

A Song of Degrees. *See* CXX.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by some holy man; after GOD *had given commandment to* David, *by* Gad *the* Seer, *to build an Altar in the threshing-floor of* Araunah *the* Jebusite; *(where the destroying Angel stood) and the* LORD *had answered him by fire upon that Altar,* 1 Chron. *XXI.* 18, 26. *whereby* David *knew, what he had till now been ignorant of, that this was the place where* GOD *would be worshipped, and have his Temple built,* XXII. 1. *Accordingly we read expresly, that* Solomon *therefore built the Temple in this place; because* GOD *here appeared to* David *his Father, and* David *designed and prepared this place for it:* (2 Chron. *III.* 1.) *that there* GOD's *habitation might be fixed; and not removed from place to place, uncertainly, as it had been in former times. For the Tabernacle, which the Hebrews call* Mischkan, *had been in an unsettled condition, except one period of time, ever since they came into the Land of* Canaan. *It was first pitched in* Gilgal, *and staid there* 24 *years. Then it was removed to* Shiloh, *where it remained to the death of* Eli, 369 *years. After his death,* Shiloh *being laid waste, it was translated to* Nob, *where it remained, they say,* 13 *years: (but was now no better than a Cabinet without its Jewel; the Ark being in another place, and never restored to it after that desolation of* Shiloh; *see* Psal. *LXVIII.) After the death of* Samuel, *they say,* Nob *was also destroyed. And then it was carried to* Gibeon, *where* Solomon *found it, and from thence fetcht it, when he had finished the Temple. Which the Hebrews therefore call* Beth Olamim, *the eternal House; because it was fixed to a place, and out of it the Ark never departed, as it had done out of the Tabernacle: but there (as the Psalmist here speaks, Ver.* 14.) *the* LORD *took up* his rest for ever: *Never to depart, that is, to any other place, till the* Messiah *came; who was* the Temple of GOD, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily.

There are those that think Solomon *penned this Psalm; because (in the* 2 Chron. *VI. the two last Verses) he concludes his prayer at the consecration of the Temple, with some part of it, viz. Ver.* 8, 9, 10. *And truly, since he speaks as if the Priests were just taking up the Ark to carry it into this resting place, and there begs that* GOD *would not, for* David's *sake, turn away the face of his Anointed,* (i. e. *refuse to hear his prayer*) *it is not an improbable conjecture; which I shall follow in my Paraphrase. And connect also this Psalm with the former; to which it seems to have respect: if we render the* last *word of the* first *Verse, as the ancient Interpreters do; not* affliction, *but* humility, meekness, *or* modesty. *Yet I have not forgot to take notice of the other signification: and in like manner have expounded that phrase,* the mighty GOD of Jacob, *two several ways, Ver.* 2. *and* 5.

1. LORD, *remember David, and all his afflictions.*] Let it appear, O LORD, that Thou art not unmindful of the pious humility of my Father *David* (CXXXI. 1.) who chose to endure many Afflictions, rather than by unlawful means to prefer himself to a Kingdom.

Ver. 2. *How he sware unto the* LORD, *and vowed unto the mighty* GOD *of Jacob.*] Which when he enjoyed, his principal care was to provide a settled place for the Worship of GOD: for he bound himself with a solemn Oath unto the LORD, and vowed unto the mighty one who had preserved him as he did *Jacob*, in all his troubles:

Ver. 3. *Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed:*] Saying, I am resolved, as I hope to prosper, that I will not come into the new Palace, which I have built for my self, (1 *Chron.* XIV. 1.) much less, go to dwell and take up my lodging there;

Ver. 4. *I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eye-lids.*] Nay, I will not lay my self down to rest, nor take a wink of sleep,

Ver. 5. *Until I find out a place for the* LORD, *an habitation for the mighty* GOD *of Jacob.*] Until I have found out a convenient place for the Ark of the LORD, (1 *Chron.* XV. 1. XVI. 1. 43.) an habitation for that mighty One; who there

makes himſelf preſent to his people, the poſterity of *Jacob*.

Ver. 6. *Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.*] And now, behold, the LORD himſelf, to our great joy, hath told us the very place where he will fix his habitation, (1 *Chron.* XXI. 18, 26.) in the territory of *Bethlem Ephrata*, (*Gen.* XXXV. 16, 19.) in the fields of that Foreſt, where the Angel ſtood, and directed *David* to build an Altar unto the LORD, 1 *Chron.* XXI. 18. XXII. 1.

Ver. 7. *We will go into his tabernacles: we will worſhip at his footſtool.*] Let us go therefore into his Tabernacles; and proſtrating our ſelves before his Majeſty, let us take up the Ark on which his Glory ſtands, (1 *Chron.* XXVIII. 2.) with humble reverence, and bring it into the Temple which is now built for it, 2 *Chron.* V. 2, 3, 4, &c.

Ver. 8. *Ariſe, O* LORD, *into thy reſt: thou, and the ark of thy ſtrength.*] And be pleaſed, O LORD, together with the Ark, the token of thy powerful preſence among us, to tranſlate thy divine Glory thither: (2 *Chron.* V. 13, 14. VII. 1, 2, 3.) there to ſettle it ſelf, and ſtir from thence no more for ever.

Ver. 9. *Let thy prieſts be cloathed with righteouſneſs: and let thy ſaints ſhout for joy.*] Guard alſo thy Prieſts, who miniſter unto Thee here, and incompaſs them with thy Goodneſs: (2 *Cron.* VI. 41.) that they may procure thy bleſſings for others; and make all thy pious Worſhippers, who are dear unto Thee, triumph in thy kindneſs to them.

Ver. 10. *For thy ſervant David's ſake, turn not away the face of thine anointed.*] I beſeech Thee, have a reſpect to the ſincere piety of thy Father *David*, and thy gracious promiſe to him; (1 *Chron.* XXII. 2, 10, 14. XXVIII. 2, 6, &c.) and upon that account deny me not; but grant the petitions of thy ſervant, who by thy ſpecial appointment, ſucceeds him in the government of thy people.

Ver. 11. *The* LORD *hath ſworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it, Of the fruit of thy body will I ſet upon thy throne.*] According to that Oath, whereby the LORD ſecured the Kingdom to his Family; that faithful Oath, which He will never break, ſaying; One of thy Sons will I advance to ſit upon thy Throne, when thou ſhalt leave it, 1 *Chron.* XVII. 11. XXVIII. 5. 2 *Chron.* VI. 10.

Ver. 12. *If thy children will keep my covenant and my teſtimony that I ſhall teach them; their children alſo ſhall ſit upon thy throne for evermore.*] Yea, I will perpetuate this royal Dignity to thy Children in all ſucceeding Generations, (and not take it from them, as I did from *Saul*, 2 *Sam.* VII. 15, 16.) if they prove faithful and conſtant in their Religion; and obſerve all the Commandments, whereby I will teach and inſtruct them how my pleaſure is, that they ſhould worſhip and ſerve me, 1 *King.* II. 4. IX. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 13. *For the* LORD *hath choſen Sion: he hath deſired it for his habitation.*] For the LORD hath ſuch a love to *Sion*, the ſeat of the royal family, (2 *Sam.* V. 7, 9.) that he hath choſen to place his own dwelling very near unto it, 2 *Chron.* III. 1. VII. 12.

Ver. 14. *This is my reſt for ever: here will I dwell, for I have deſired it.*] Saying, this is the place where my Glory ſhall fix it ſelf for ever, (2 *Chron.* VII. 16.) I will remove no more; but here will I take up my abode: for I have pitched on this place, and declared that it is acceptable unto me, above all other, 1 *Chron.* XXI. 26. XXII. 2.

Ver. 15. *I will abundantly bleſs her proviſion: I will ſatisfie her poor with bread.*] From whence I will diſpenſe my bleſſings ſo abundantly, that *Sion*, (which is become the City of GOD, as well as of *David*) ſhall never be in any want: But I will make ſuch liberal proviſion for it, by fruitful years; that the pooreſt perſon there ſhall be ſatisfied with food, 2 *Chron.* VII. 13, 14.

Ver. 16. *I will alſo cloath her prieſts with ſalvation: and her ſaints ſhall ſhout aloud for joy.*] I will alſo defend her Prieſts, and they ſhall be giving continual thanks and praiſe for the bleſſings they ſhall procure for my pious Worſhippers: who ſhall exceedingly triumph in my kindneſs towards them.

Ver. 17. *There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.*] There will I make the Regal Power and Majeſty of *David*, to put forth it ſelf afreſh in his royal Succeſſors; no ſooner ſhall one be extinguiſhed, but another ſhall ſhine, (1 *King.* XI. 36. 2 *Chron.* XXI. 7.) in ſuch ſplendour, as ſhall give a luſtre to the name of that anointed Servant of mine; till the great Prince, the *Meſſiah*, appear.

Ver. 18. *His enemies will I clothe with ſhame: but upon himſelf ſhall his crown flouriſh.*] And whoſoever they be that go about to deſtroy this ſucceſſion, they ſhall be ſo miſerably defeated, that they ſhall not be able to ſhew their faces; while, with ſhame and confuſion they behold the regal Dignity in his Family (notwithſtanding all their attempts againſt it) in an unfading glory.

PSALM CXXXIII.

A Song of Degrees. *See* CXX.

ARGUMENT.

When there was no other ſtrife among all the Tribes of Iſrael, *than who ſhould be moſt forward in returning to their Allegiance; and the Children of* Judah *alſo were inclined as one man to bring back* David *to his Kingdom, from which his ſon* Abſalom *had driven him, (*2 Sam. *XIX.* 9, 14.) *he fell into a rapturous admiration of that happy unity and concord, which made them meet together in one place to worſhip* GOD: *(for ſo, I think,* Zanchius *rightly underſtands the laſt word of the* firſt *Verſe, which we tranſlate* together in unity, *to relate to the publick Aſſemblies;) which unity he commended to them afterwards in this Pſalm, as their beſt preſervative and ſecurity in future ages. This ſeems to me more probable to be the occaſion of it, than the concurrence of all the Tribes to make*

him

him King after Saul's *death, (which is the common account that is given of it) for then* Sion *was not in his possession: and it is not likely he would then have made such mention of it as he doth here, while it remained in the hands of the* Jebusites. *But whatsoever was the first occasion, it was aptly applied to their condition after the return of their Captivity from* Babylon; *when, as* Theodoret *notes, the Tribes which had been divided by the imprudence of* Rehoboam, *were then again united: living under one and the same Government, and worshipping* God *in the same place, and the same manner as the Law prescribed.*

It was as fitly used by the first Christians, to express their joy for the blessed union of Jews and Gentiles; and may now serve the uses of all Christian Societies, whose happiness lies in holy peace and concord.

1. B*Ehold, how good and how pleasant* it is, *for brethren to dwell together in unity.*] O consider, how beneficial and delightful it is, beyond all expression, for those that come from the same stock, and are of the same Religion; to have no differences one with another; but to live and worship God together, in such a friendly Agreement, as if they had but one Soul among them all.

Ver. 2. It is *like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.*] I cannot resemble it to any thing better than to that excellent ointment compounded of several Spices, *(Exod.* XXX. 21, *&c.)* which consecrated the High Priest to the Divine Service, *(Levit.* VIII. 12.) and was poured in such plenty, that, running over all his face, even to the collar of his garment, (where he did bear the names of all the Tribes of *Israel*) it perfumed all the place with its fragrant odour; for just so doth this holy concord make you both dear to God, and procure you an excellent fame among men; who cannot but be pleased to see such variety of humours and inclinations all conspiring with one accord, to promote the common good of the whole Society.

Ver. 3. *As the dew of Hermon,* and as the dew *that descended upon the mountains of Sion; for there the* Lord *commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*] The dew of heaven is not more necessary for the parch'd mountains; which though never so distant one from another, (as far as from *Hermon* to *Sion*) are refreshed with it, than this is for men of all ranks and conditions, who every where perceive the comfortable fruits of it; for to this the Divine favour is immutably annexed, which will pour upon such Societies innumerable blessings; giving them an happy and long life, (an earnest of endless felicity) in a constant enjoyment of all manner of good things.

PSALM CXXXIV.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

It is uncertain by whom this Psalm was composed, but it seems to have been made to be sung by some one or more of the Levites, at the shutting up of the Gates of the Temple; to excite the rest, whose turn it was to watch that night, to be diligent in their office of singing Psalms, and making devout prayers for the people. It is the last of those that have the Title of A Song of Degrees, *concerning which see* CXX.

1. B*Ehold, bless ye the* Lord, *all ye servants of the* Lord, *which by night stand in the house of the* Lord.] Attend to your duty, O ye Ministers of the Lord; who not only by day, but by night also reverently wait upon Him in his House: (1 *Chron.* IX. 33.) cease not to declare how great, and how good the Lord is.

Ver. 2. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary: and bless the* Lord.] Be fervent in your devotion; and disclaiming all dependance on any thing else, praise the Lord in his Sanctuary with pure hearts and clean hands; and give thanks for all his benefits.

Ver. 3. *The* Lord *that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Sion.*] Pray also for his people *Israel*, and say; The great Lord, who, though He cannot be confined, being the Creator of all things, yet hath his special residence in this place, dispense his blessings both heavenly and earthly from hence, unto every one of you.

PSALM CXXXV.

ARGUMENT.

This perhaps was the morning Hymn, which the Præcentor *(Ver. 4, 5.) called upon the Levites to sing, at the opening of the Gates of the Temple: as the former was sung at the shutting up of the Gates in the evening. It recounts several of the great works of the* Lord; *especially towards that Nation; whom it excites to stedfastness in their Religion, and to contempt of Idols and Idolaters. It both begins and concludes with an Exhortation to give praise to* God; *and so was intituled, as several other Psalms are, (CVI, CXI, &c.)* Hallelujah, *or* Praise the Lord. *That is, by this Hymn set forth the most excellent perfections, and works of the* Lord.

There are those who conjecture, from what we read Ver. 14. *of this Psalm, that when it was composed they were (or rather, had been lately) infested by some of their idolatrous neighbours. Whose gods the Psalmist derides in the very same manner as he doth Psalm* CXV. *For the four following Verses of this Psalm (15, 16, 17, 18.) differ very little from the 4, 5, 6, 8. of that, which*

which it is certain was compoſed in a time of great diſtreſs; as this was, when it was over.

1. *PRaiſe ye the* LORD, *praiſe ye the name of the* LORD, *praiſe* him, *O ye ſervants of the* LORD.] Let all here preſent praiſe the moſt wiſe omnipotent goodneſs of the LORD: Let him eſpecially be praiſed, by you his Prieſts, who miniſter unto his Majeſty.

Ver. 2. *Ye that ſtand in the houſe of the* LORD, *in the courts of the houſe of our* GOD.] And by the Levites who attend upon him in his Houſe; together with all the reſt of his people, that frequent the Courts of GOD's Houſe, who is our conſtant and moſt liberal benefactor.

Ver. 3. *Praiſe ye the* LORD, *for the* LORD *is good: ſing praiſes unto his name, for* it *is pleaſant.*] Let this excite you all to praiſe the LORD: For as his Nature is moſt excellent, ſo He is the fountain of all the good we enjoy: and no employment is ſo delightful as to acknowledge his perfections, and commemorate the benefits we have received from him, by ſinging Pſalms and Hymns of praiſe and thanks unto Him.

Ver. 4. *For the* LORD *hath choſen Jacob unto himſelf*, and *Iſrael for his peculiar treaſure.*] I invite you above all other people to this heavenly duty: both becauſe the LORD had a peculiar kindneſs for *Jacob* your Forefather; and doth ſtill exerciſe a ſpecial providence over you his Children, as far more dear and precious to Him, than the reſt of mankind, who are under his care.

Ver. 5. *For I know that the* LORD *is great, and that our* LORD *is above all gods.*] And becauſe I am ſenſible that the LORD, under whoſe government we are, is ſo great and powerful above all other Beings, though called by the name of gods; that you can never praiſe his Majeſty enough.

Ver. 6. *Whatſoever the* LORD *pleaſed*, that *did he in heaven and in earth, in the ſeas and all deep places.*] His own will alone gives bounds to his power: for, as none act without his leave, ſo none can hinder him from doing what pleaſes himſelf; in the heavens as well as in the earth, and the ſeas, and other deep waters.

Ver. 7. *He cauſeth the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the earth, he maketh lightnings for the rain: he bringeth the wind out of his treaſuries.*] He raiſes vapours, for inſtance, from any quarter of the earth, and makes them go up into the air: where ſome of them break forth in flaſhes of lightning; and that (which is ſtrange) is followed with great ſhowers of rain: and, from unknown places and cauſes, ſtrong and violent winds blow with ſuch continuance, as if they came out of ſome treaſury, where he had gathered, and long lockt them up, till he had occaſion to bring them forth.

Ver. 8. *Who ſmote the firſt-born of Egypt, both of man and beaſt.*] he made the *Egyptians* feel how much ſuperiour he was to all their gods; (*Exod.* XII. 12.) who could not defend them from his ſtroke: but he ſent his Angel, and, in one night ſlew all the firſt-born in the Country, both of man and beaſt, *Exod.* XII. 29.

Ver. 9. Who *ſent tokens and wonders into the midſt of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his ſervants.*] Before which terrible blow, He had given many other wonderful demonſtrations of his power, in ſeveral miraculous plagues; which he openly inflicted on thee, O *Egypt*; not only on the meaner ſort, but upon the King and all his Court, *Exod.* VII, VIII, IX, *&c.*

Ver. 10. *Who ſmote great nations, and ſlew mighty kings:*] And after he had by theſe means brought you out of their bondage, He overthrew ſeveral great Nations, and ſlew potent Kings: who, preſuming of their ſtrength, oppoſed the accompliſhment of his promiſes to you.

Ver. 11. *Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Baſhan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:*] Firſt of all *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, who were eſteemed invincible, (*Numb.* XXI. 24. *Amos* II. 9.) and then *Og*, that giantly King of *Baſhan*, (*Numb.* XXI. 33. *Deut.* III. 11.) and at laſt all the Kingdoms and Kings of the Land of *Canaan*, *Joſh.* XII. 7, 24.

Ver. 12. *And gave their land* for *an heritage, an heritage unto Iſrael his people.*] Which he graciouſly beſtowed upon us, the Children of *Iſrael*, as an Inheritance we ſhould hold of him, by a Divine Right; of which none, while we continue his obedient people, ſhall be able to diſpoſſeſs us.

Ver. 13. *Thy name*, O LORD, endureth *for ever, and thy memorial*, O LORD, *throughout all generations.*] O LORD, how aſtoniſhing is this thy omnipotent Goodneſs! the fame of which ſhall never be forgotten: But an illuſtrious memory, O LORD, ſhall be continued of it, from generation to generation.

Ver. 14. *For the* LORD *will judge his people, and he will repent himſelf concerning his ſervants.*] For tho' our enemies may ſometimes oppreſs us, when we offend Him, yet the LORD at laſt will take the part of his people, and deliver them: and, being reconciled unto his ſervants, will turn his ſeverity into kindneſs towards them.

Ver. 15. *The Idols of the heathen* are *ſilver and gold, the work of mens hands.*] It is not in the power of the Idols, which the heathen worſhip, to divert his kindneſs from us; for they are of no more value than the ſilver and the gold of which they are made: and are ſo far from being able to do any thing, that they themſelves are made by thoſe that adore them.

Ver. 16. *They have mouths, but they ſpeak not; eyes have they, but they ſee not.*] They are mere Images of things, without their life: having mouths, but cannot give a word of advice, or comfort to their ſupplicants; and eyes alſo, but cannot ſee, much leſs prevent any danger that doth approach them.

Ver. 17. *They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there* any *breath in their mouths.*] Ears they have; but cannot hear a word that is ſaid to them: and noſes alſo; but they do not ſo much as breath, much leſs can they ſmell the odours that are offered to them.

Ver. 18.

Ver. 18. *They that make them are like unto them: ſo is every one that truſteth in them.*] They that make them therefore, or put any confidence in them, are as ſenſeleſs as themſelves; having eyes for inſtance, but do not ſee, that brutes are more excellent than ſuch gods; and that no help is to be expected from them.

Ver. 19. *Bleſs the* LORD; *O houſe of Iſrael: bleſs the* LORD, *O houſe of Aaron.*] O how much then are we all bound to bleſs the LORD, the Creator of all; who hath freed us from this ſtupid blindneſs: Let the whole Nation of the Children of *Iſrael*, eſpecially the Prieſts of the LORD, praiſe him and give thanks to him, who hath better inſtructed them.

Ver. 20. *Bleſs the* LORD, *O houſe of Levi; ye that fear the* LORD, *bleſs the* LORD.] Let all the Levites declare how gracious He is: yea, let all his pious Worſhippers, of whatſoever Nation they be, join in this heavenly employment, of ſpeaking good of the LORD.

Ver. 21. *Bleſſed be the* LORD *out of Sion, which dwelleth at Jeruſalem. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] Let them all ſay, with one accord, the LORD be ever praiſed in this holy place; who, though he be the owner of all the World, yet makes his ſpecial reſidence at *Jeruſalem*.

The honour the Heathens give to their lifeleſs Images ought to excite you all, with the greater devotion, to praiſe the LORD of the World.

PSALM CXXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm, like the former, is a commemoration of the goodneſs of GOD, *expreſſed in his wonderful works: particularly thoſe He had done for that Nation: And, it is likely, was compoſed to be ſung upon the great Feſtivals; as every day I ſuppoſe they ſung the foregoing: which is of the ſame ſtrain with this, and contains much of the ſame matter; only here, at every half Verſe, one half of the Quire anſwers to the other in theſe words;* For his mercy endureth for ever. *A form of acknowledgment preſcribed by* David *to be uſed continually in the Divine Service,* 1 Chron. *XVI.* 41: *and accordingly followed by* Solomon, 2 Chron. *VII.* 3, 6. *when he dedicated the Temple; and by* Jehoſhaphat, *when by the incouragement of a Prophet he went out to encounter a vaſt Army with ſmall Forces,* 2 Chron. *XX.* 21. *and here is repeated* ſix and twenty *times, to make them the more ſenſible that they owed all they had to the mere bounty of* GOD: *and to excite them to depend intirely upon it; and reſt aſſured it would never fail them if they did piouſly and moſt heartily acknowledge it. Such repetitions we uſe now in our earneſt Prayers, when we ſay;* LORD, have mercy upon us, *&c. which are no more vain than theſe. I have variouſly expreſſed the ſenſe of this repeated acknowledgment, according as the other part of the ſeveral Verſes ſeemed to direct me.*

1. O *Give thanks unto the* LORD, *for he is good: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Offer your thankful Hymns unto the LORD of all; who is as good as he is great: and will continue his kindneſs (which hath been exceeding abundant towards us) unto all ſucceeding generations.

Ver. 2. *O give thanks unto the* GOD *of gods: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] He is the Sovereign of all the heavenly Hoſts; and therefore praiſe him, and give thanks unto him; for he can employ them all for your help and protection (as he hath in former times) and you need not doubt of his kindneſs, which continues unto all Ages.

Ver. 3. *O give thanks unto the* LORD *of lords: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] All the Kings and Princes of the Earth are his Subjects; upon which account alſo, give him praiſe and thanks: For his kindneſs endures throughout all Ages, to defend you, as he hath done hitherto, from their tyrannical violence.

Ver. 4. *To him who alone doth great wonders: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] He it is, and he alone whoſe Works are ſo great that they ſurpriſe all thoſe who ſeriouſly conſider them, with wonder and aſtoniſhment; and therefore give him praiſe and thanks: For his kindneſs will never fail, ſtill to imploy his infinite Power for the good of thoſe, who are truly grateful to him.

Ver. 5. *To him that by wiſdom made the heavens: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Look upon the Heavens, and behold, with admiration and praiſe, the ſplendour and the order wherein his wiſdom hath contrived and ſettled them: For his kindneſs is as large, and as firm and durable as they.

Ver. 6. *To him that ſtretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And then look down to the Earth, thankfully praiſe him; who brought it out of the waters, and preſerves it, in its juſt extent, from being again overflowed by them; for his kindneſs is no leſs immoveable, and by length of time can never be impaired.

Ver. 7. *To him that made great lights: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Witneſs thoſe great Lights which never go out; but always call upon us to praiſe and give thanks to him; who made them to illuminate the world, and to be the emblems of his kindneſs; which ſends its benign influences continually upon us unto all generations.

Ver. 8. *The ſun to rule by day: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] By day the Sun exerts his power to quicken all inferiour Beings; and excites us to praiſe him, and be thankful to him: whoſe kindneſs thereby perpetually adminiſters to us all neceſſary things; and will do ſo to the end of the world.

Ver. 9. *The moon and ſtars to rule by night: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And by night the Moon, or the Stars ſupply its place; and let us ſee how much we are bound to praiſe and thank him; whoſe kindneſs is ſo conſtant,

that, in the worſt condition, it will never quite forſake us.

Ver. 10. *To him that ſmote Egypt in their firſt-born: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] We muſt needs ſay ſo, and think our ſelves ingaged above all others, to give him thanks; if we call to mind that memorable night (*Exod.* XII. 29.) when he puniſhed the *Egyptians* with the loſs of all their firſt-born: For his kindneſs ſtill continues for ever to relieve thoſe that are injured; and to puniſh their inſolent Oppreſſors.

Ver. 11. *And brought out Iſrael from among them: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Let us not forget how after that ſtroke he brought our Forefathers out of the cruel Bondage, wherein they had long held them (*Exod.* XII. 41, 42.) but thankfully acknowledge that wonderful deliverance: For it is an argument why we ſhould never diſtruſt his kindneſs, in the foreſt ſtraits that can befal us.

Ver. 12. *With a ſtrong hand, and with a ſtretched out arm: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] His Power let us remember, is irreſiſtible, which firſt by leſſer, then by greater ſigns and wonders delivered us out of their hands (*Exod.* VI. 5, 6. VII, VIII, *&c.*) to praiſe and magnifie him, whoſe kindneſs is ſtupendiouſly great, and will never ceaſe to ſuccour thoſe who depend upon him.

Ver. 13. *To him which divided the red ſea into parts: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Let us therefore give thanks to him; who when our Forefathers utterly deſpaired of ſafety (*Exod.* XIV. 10, 11.) commanded the red Sea to retire, and leave a broad way for them to paſs, (*ver.* 21.) which plainly proves that his kindneſs is inexhauſtible, and alway ready to help us in the moſt dreadful dangers.

Ver. 14. *And made Iſrael to paſs through the midſt of it: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] For he led them ſafely through the very midſt of the Sea (which roſe up like a wall on either hand of them, *Exod.* XIV. 22.) and will by his kindneſs, eternally ſecure all thoſe that piouſly confide in him:

Ver. 15. *But overthrew Pharaoh and his hoſt in the red ſea: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] But throw thoſe that oppoſe him headlong into deſtruction, as he did *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt, in the very ſame place where *Iſrael* was preſerved; (*Exod.* XIV. 27, *&c.*) For his kindneſs loves to compleat his Favours, and perfect what he hath begun for his people.

Ver. 16. *To him which led his people through the wilderneſs: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And accordingly when he had thus delivered them, he led his people by the direction of a glorious Cloud, through an untrodden Deſart; and there (with our thankful praiſes let it be remembred) made a miraculous proviſion for them, (*Exod.* XVI.) For his endleſs kindneſs, whereſoever they went, ſtill with new Benefits purſued them.

Ver. 17. *To him which ſmote great kings: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] When potent Kings oppoſed their paſſage to the promiſed Land, he utterly diſcomfitted them (to his praiſe be it thankfully acknowledged:) For his kindneſs was not ſtopt by difficulties, but ever overcame them.

Ver. 18. *And ſlew famous kings: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Tho' they were Kings famous for their proweſs; yet, ſuch was his for ever to be praiſed kindneſs towards us; he gave us as eaſie and as abſolute a victory over them, as he had done before over *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt.

Ver. 19. *Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Over *Sihon*, King of that fierce Nation of the *Amorites*, who were thought invincible, (*Amos* II. 9.) For his kindneſs was mightier than they, and gave us this as an earneſt of future conqueſts over our Enemies.

Ver. 20. *And Og the King of Baſhan: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Over that huge Tyrant *Og* the King of *Baſhan*, (*Deut.* III. 11.) For his kindneſs added that, as a new pledge of what he intended to do for us, when we came into *Canaan*.

Ver. 21. *And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And gave both their Countries to be held of him, as a perpetual inheritance: For his kindneſs doth not decay (nor loves to revoke his Favours) but continues to the lateſt Poſterity.

Ver. 22. Even *an heritage unto Iſrael his ſervant: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] An Inheritance they were, which he ſettled upon us the Children of *Iſrael*, as long as we continue his faithful Servants: For his kindneſs hath no end; but delights to perpetuate his Mercies to thoſe who are worthy of them.

Ver. 23. *Who remembred us in our low eſtate: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Nay, when for our ſins we were ſeverely afflicted, and in danger to be thrown out of this good land into which at laſt he brought us; (*Judg.* II, III, IV, *&c.*) He was pleaſed graciouſly to relieve us: For his kindneſs pardoned our ingratitude, and was as forward as ever to beſtow freſh Benefits upon us.

Ver. 24. *And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] And reſcued us many a time, when we cried unto him, from the power of thoſe that tyrannized over us: For his kindneſs was not ſpent by the frequent deliverances it had given us; but ſtill granted new matter for our thankſgivings to him.

Ver. 25. *Who giveth food to all fleſh: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] Whoſe Bounty is not confined to us alone, but ſupplies the wants of all mankind, yea, of all living Creatures: For His kindneſs hath no bounds; nor will ever ceaſe to make a plentiful proviſion for them.

Ver. 26. *O give thanks unto the* God *of heaven: for his mercy* endureth *for ever.*] O raiſe your hearts to give him thanks with the higheſt praiſes; whoſe power extends it ſelf beyond this Earth, even unto the higheſt Heavens: For his kindneſs is ſo unwearied; that we may hope from thence to be ever receiving more and more of his Bleſſings.

PSALM

PSALM CXXXVII.

ARGUMENT.

This is a mournful Song, compoſed by ſome of the captive Levites *in Babylon; when he reflected upon their ſad parting with their dear Country, and the ſcorn wherewith their inſulting enemies treated them, in that ſtrange land. Which he foreſaw* God *would ſeverely puniſh, by the hand of ſome other cruel people; who ſhould ſhew them as little mercy, as they had ſhewed the* Iſraelites.

The vulgar Latin *aſcribes this Pſalm to* Jeremiah: *upon which Inſcription,* Theodoret *(who found it alſo in ſome* Greek *Copies in his time) paſſes this cenſure; that the bold Author of it wanted wit, as the Inſcription it ſelf openly proclaims: for* Jeremiah *was not carried captive into* Babylon; *but, when he had ſtaid ſome time in* Judea, *was compelled by the diſobedient* Jews *to go down with them into* Egypt. *Yet there are thoſe, who to excuſe this, would have us think that* Jeremiah *ſent this Pſalm to the captives in* Babylon: *and that it is called a Pſalm of* David; *(for ſo it is in the* vulgar Latin *alſo) becauſe made after the example of his Pſalms: As* Virgil *ſaid he ſung* Aſcræum carmen *among the* Romans; *when he made his* Georgicks *in imitation of* Heſiod.

In the Paraphraſe of the firſt Verſe I have followed a conjecture of St. Chryſoſtom's, *that the captives were not ſuffered (at their firſt coming thither) to dwell within any of their Towns or Cities; but were diſperſed all along ſeveral Rivers of the Country; where they built Tabernacles or Cottages, for themſelves: and perhaps were forced to drain thoſe moiſt places to make them wholeſom.*

1. *BY the rivers of Babylon, there we ſat down, yea, we wept, when we remembred Sion.*] When we were tranſported from our own Country into the Land of *Babylon*, and had the ſides of *Euphrates*, and ſeveral of its Rivers *(Exek.* I. 1. and *Baruch* I. 4.) aſſigned for our habitation, there we ſat down in a ſorrowful poſture; and could not refrain from tears, when we called to mind the happy days which we enjoyed in the holy Hill of *Sion*.

Ver. 2. *We hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midſt thereof.*] We brought our harps along with us, wherewith we were wont to praiſe the LORD: (1 *Chron.* XV. 16.) But as our fruitful vines and fig-trees, under which we formerly ſate, were turned into barren willows and oſiers; ſo all our mirth and joy was turned into ſuch heavineſs and ſorrow of heart, that we let all our inſtruments of Muſick hang neglected upon the boughs of thoſe doleful trees.

Ver. 3. *For there they that carried us away captive, required of us a ſong; and they that waſted us, required of us mirth, ſaying, Sing us one of the ſongs of Sion.*] For when our new Maſters, who had carried us away captive, they that had laid *Jeruſalem* on heaps, and had power to do what they pleaſed with us, required us (between jeſt and earneſt) to entertain them with our Muſick; and to let them hear one of thoſe Songs, which were wont to be ſung in the Temple.

Ver. 4. *How ſhall we ſing the* LORD's *ſong in a ſtrange land?*] Neither fear nor favour could extort this ſervice from our Levites, but they reſolutely anſwered; As thoſe Songs were not made for paſtime and ſport, but in honour of the great LORD of the world; ſo how can you imagin that miſerable ſlaves are diſpoſed to ſing? and to ſing thoſe Songs in the Land where we are exiles; which recount the mercies of GOD unto us, in our once moſt flouriſhing Country?

Ver. 5. *If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.*] No (ſaid I then within my ſelf) if I forget thy deſolations, O *Jeruſalem*, (though never ſo far removed from thee) ſo as to gratifie their deſires, by prophaning thy Muſick and thy Songs; then let my right hand be benummed, or quite loſe its skill of touching the harp any more.

Ver. 6. *If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jeruſalem above my chief joy.*] Let me be ſtruck dumb, and never be able to move my tongue; if I be not ſo mindful of thee, as never to ſing again; till I ſee *Jeruſalem*, and her holy Solemnities reſtored.

Ver. 7. *Remember, O* LORD, *the children of Edom, in the day of Jeruſalem, who ſaid, Raſe it, raſe it, even to the foundation thereof.*] Which joyful day I hope will come; when Thou, O LORD, wilt call our enemies to an account: And firſt of all, reckon with the *Edomites*. (*Jer.* XLIX. 10. *Ezek.* XXV. 12.) who inſtead of pitying *Jeruſalem*, as became kind neighbours and relations, were glad to ſee the day of its deſolations; and encouraged our deſtroyers with their acclamations, ſaying; Lay it flat, lay it even with the ground upon which it ſtands.

Ver. 8. *O daughter of Babylon, who art to be deſtroyed: happy ſhall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou haſt ſerved us.*] And then ſhall your turns come, O ye *Babylonians*; who have laid waſte ſo many Nations, but ſhall one day, be made deſolate your ſelves, (*Iſa.* XIII. 19. *&c.*) And may that Prince and people proſper and be happy, (*Jer.* L. 9, 41.) who ſhall pay you in your kind; and uſe you as barbarouſly as you uſed us, (*Jer.* LI. 24, 35, 49.)

Ver. 9. *Happy ſhall he be that taketh and daſheth thy little ones againſt the ſtones.*] He ſhall be praiſed and thought to have done a worthy work, who ſhall ſnatch your ſucking children from their mothers breaſts; and have no more mercy on them, than upon the whelps of wolves, or ſuch like creatures; but ſhall daſh out their brains againſt the walls of your houſes, or ſtones in the ſtreet, (*Iſa.* XIII. 16.) that there may be no remains of ſuch a cruel generation, *Jer.* LI. 62.

PSALM

PSALM CXXXVIII.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

This is one of David's *Pſalms, (as the Title aſſures us) wherein he thankfully acknowledges* God's *Goodneſs to him, in advancing him from a low and afflicted condition to the royal dignity: which remarkable change would invite, he thought, other Kings and Princes to have a very great regard to his Divine Majeſty: who, he hoped therefore, would ſupport and defend him in his new-gotten Kingdom; by the ſame Almighty Power which raiſed him unto it.*

1. *I Will praiſe thee with my whole heart, before the gods will I ſing praiſe unto thee.*] I will make Thee my thankful acknowledgments, O Lord, with the devouteſt affections of my heart: thy holy Angels ſhall be witneſſes of my gratitude, which I will expreſs in Pſalms and Hymns, in the preſence of the great Aſſembly of the Judges, (*Exod.* XXII. 9. *Pſal.* LXXXII. 1, 6.) that they may remember, to whom they owe their power and authority.

Ver. 2. *I will worſhip towards thy holy temple, and praiſe thy name, for thy loving-kindneſs, and for thy truth: for thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name.*] I will proſtrate my ſelf in the humbleſt adorations of Thee, toward the place where the Monument of thy Divine Preſence is; and acknowledge how much I am indebted to thy almighty Goodneſs: firſt for promiſing me, out of thy mere grace and favour, the royal Dignity; and then for performing thy promiſe moſt faithfully: For Thou haſt manifeſted thy moſt excellent power and goodneſs to me, in nothing ſo much, as in punctually fulfilling thy promiſe, (1 *Sam.* XVI. 13.) notwithſtanding all the oppoſition which was made to it; nay, in raiſing me higher than I expected.

Ver. 3. *In the day when I cryed thou anſweredſt me:* and *ſtrengthenedſt me* with *ſtrength in my ſoul.*] I had long ago faln ſhort of this honour to which I am advanced, hadſt not Thou, during all the time of *Saul*'s perſecution, as readily relieved me, as I cried to Thee: and mightily ſupported my ſpirit, by a couragious faith and hope in Thee.

Ver. 4. *All the kings of the earth ſhall praiſe thee, O* Lord, *when they hear the words of thy mouth.*] Which will move, ſure, all our neighbouring Kings, who have any knowledge of my affairs (2 *Sam.* V. 11, 12. VIII. 10.) to join with me, in praiſing Thee, O Lord: when they ſhall hear, by how many ſtrange providences thou haſt brought to paſs, that which thou promiſedſt to me by thy Prophet.

Ver. 5. *Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the* Lord: *for great is the glory of the* Lord.] The wonderful ways whereby the Lord brings things about, ſhall be the ſubject of their Songs; and they ſhall think it their greateſt happineſs to be guided and governed by him: for they ſhall confeſs, that none can do ſuch glorious things, as the Lord hath wrought.

Ver. 6. *Tho' the* Lord *be high, yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.*] Whoſe ſublime greatneſs doth not make Him neglect (as they ſee in me) the meaneſt perſons; eſpecially when their minds are as humble as their conditions: but will not let him ſtoop to the loftieſt Princes (as they may ſee in *Saul*) whom He deſpiſes, when they are forgetful of Him, and ungrateful to Him for his benefits.

Ver. 7. *Though I walk in the mids of trouble, thou wilt revive me, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thine hand againſt the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand ſhall ſave me.*] Which have been ſo great to me, that ſhould I fall again into the ſame ſtraits wherein I was before, and be encompaſſed with them; I ſhould hope that thou wouldeſt preſerve me, and bring me ſafe out of them all: Thy power, I am confident, will repreſs the violent aſſaults of my enemies; and by thy almighty goodneſs I ſhall be delivered from their wrath and fury, 2 *Sam.* V. 17, *&c.* VIII. 1, *&c.*

Ver. 8. *The* Lord *will perfect* that which *concerneth me: thy mercy, O* Lord, endureth *for ever: forſake not the works of thine own hands.*] The Lord who hath begun, will go on to finiſh his gracious intentions towards me: not for my merits (I know they are none at all) but for thy own mercy ſake, O Lord; which as it was the ſole motive to what Thou haſt done for me, ſo will I hope (for it is ſtill the ſame, and ever will be) incline Thee to preſerve and ſettle me that dignity; to which not my ambition, but thy own good will and pleaſure hath promoted me.

PSALM CXXXIX.

To the chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The two *laſt Verſes of this Pſalm ſeem to me a ſufficient indication that* David *(to whom the Title aſcribes it) compoſed it, when he lay under the imputation of having evil deſigns upon* Saul, 1 Sam. *XXIV.* 9. *which as he proteſts againſt, in ſeveral parts of other Pſalms, and calls* God *often to witneſs his integrity; ſo here he appeals unto Him in a ſet and ſolemn meditation, compoſed on purpoſe to repreſent before Him the clearneſs of his intentions: which never ſuffered ſuch deſigns to enter into his thoughts. And who could believe that a man who ſeriouſly acknowledged, it was impoſſible to conceal any thing from* God's *all-ſeeing Eye, who forms us in the womb; ſhould be ſo impudent as to make this appeal unto Him; if he were conſcious to himſelf of any ſuch guilt? And which is more, how could he be confident (as he declares he was Ver.* 19.) *that* God *would make his innocence evidently appear, by deſtroying his oppoſers;*

if

if he did not know they were calumniators? whose vile aspersions when God *had effectually confuted, he delivered this Psalm to the Master of the Musick, as a lasting testimony of his sincerity all along before he came to the Kingdom; and a constant admonishment to himself and others, never to promote any designs for the future by sinister arts, though managed so secretly that they lay hid from the eyes of all the world: since* God *cannot but be privy to them; who loves righteousness, and hates all iniquity.*

1. O Lord, *thou hast searched me, and known* me.] I am accused, O Lord, of grievous crimes; but my comfort is, Thou seest I am not guilty of them: For the exactest survey, cannot make any thing so well known to us, as I am to thee; who art throughly acquainted with me.

Ver. 2. *Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*] Thou knowest what designs I have, when I sit musing at home; and what I go about when I stir abroad: nay, my inclinations are so perfectly understood by thee; that before I have conceived any design it is visible unto thee.

Ver. 3. *Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted* with *all my ways.*] Nothing can be so narrowly sifted, as all the motions of my body and mind, both by day and by night, are scanned by thy all-penetrating eye: which comprehends and is intimately privy to, all the ends which I pursue.

Ver. 4. *For* there is *not a word in my tongue,* but *lo, O* Lord, *thou knowest it altogether.*] When I am about to speak, Thou, O Lord, (such is thy most admirable wisdom) needest not to be informed what it is: but knowest before I open my mouth, every thing I intend to utter.

Ver. 5. *Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*] Whatsoever I have done long ago, is as well known to thee, as that which is lately past, or which I am about to do: For I am so invironed, by thee, and so absolutely in thy power; that I cannot possibly escape thy notice, nor so much as stir without thy leave.

Ver. 6. Such *knowledge* is *too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot* attain *unto it.*] O amazing height of understanding! It is in vain to think I can hide any thing from it: which so far surpasses all I can say or conceive; that it excels even my admiration.

Ver. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*] Into what world shall I go, where thou art not as present as thou art in this? It is impossible for me, should I make never so much haste, to get out of thy sight.

Ver. 8. *If I ascend up into heaven, thou* art *there: if I make my bed in hell, behold,* thou art there.] If I could get up into the highest part of heaven, I should not be out of thy reach: or go down and lie in the lowest depth of the Earth, I should find thee still as near unto me.

Ver. 9. *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea:*] If I could move as swiftly as the light of the rising Sun; and in an instant flie from hence, and take up my dwelling in the remotest parts of the world:

Ver. 10. *Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*] I should not be a jot the farther from thee; without whom as I could not get thither, so I should be still subject to thy Government, and as much under the care and protection of thy almighty Providence, there, as any where else.

Ver. 11. *If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me.*] If I should have such a thought as this in my mind, that, though thou art present every-where, yet, in the dark I may lie undiscovered by thee; it would be very foolish: For when the Sun is gone down, all that is in me is as apparent unto thee, as if it were noonday.

Ver. 12. *Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light* are *both alike* to thee.] The darkness cannot conceal any thing from thee; who, being the fountain of light, seest as well in the blackest night as in the brightest day: the night and the day, the most open and the most covert practices, are equally clear unto thy view.

Ver. 13. *For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mothers womb.*] For my very thoughts (and what is there more abstruse than they) my most retired thoughts and contrivances, and my most secret desires, are apparent to thee: whose I am, and by whom I was wrapt up in those skins, which inclosed me in my mother's womb; than which there is nothing more hidden and dark.

Ver. 14. *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous* are *thy works, and* that *my soul knoweth right well.*] Yet there (such is thy stupendious wisdom, which I will never cease to praise, and thankfully acknowledge) I was, I know not how, in such a wonderful manner, formed; that the thoughts of it strike me with astonishment: thy operations in that work are most admirable; and of that I am exceeding sensible, but I can say no more; for they are incomprehensible.

Ver. 15. *My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret; and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*] Though I was made in so secret a place, yet not the least joint in my body was concealed from thy eyes: but I received from thee there (where no more light can come, than there doth into the lowest depths of the earth) such a comely distinction of parts, and variety of powers; that no embroidery can be so curiously wrought.

Ver. 16. *Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all* my members *were written,* which *in continuance were fashioned, when* as yet there was *none of them.*]

For when the matter out of which I was made, was without any form, it was viſible to Thee how every muſcle, vein and artery, with all the reſt of my body ſhould be wrought, out of the pattern of them, which was in thy mind: and accordingly in time, when there was not ſo much as one of them, they were all faſhioned, for the ſeveral uſes to which they are deſigned; and not the ſmalleſt of them omitted, or left imperfect.

Ver. 17. *How precious alſo are thy thoughts unto me, O* God! *how great is the ſum of them!*] How invaluable alſo, and incomprehenſible (O God, I am not able to expreſs the high and grateful ſenſe I have of it) is thy tender care and providence, which thou haſt exerciſed over me ever ſince I was born! All the ſecret paſſages of it amount to ſuch a ſumm; that I am not able to give an account of them.

Ver. 18. *If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand: when I awake I am ſtill with thee.*] When I attempt to reckon how many they are, I find that I may as well undertake to number the ſand: For, though I continue the whole day in this employment, and after a nights reſt, begin again in the next morning to think how numerous thy mercies are; I am ſtill as far as ever from ſeeing any end of them.

Ver. 19. *Surely thou wilt ſlay the wicked, O* God: *depart from me therefore ye bloody men.*] Which makes me confident, O God, Thou wilt not now deſert me; but rather deſtroy that wicked man, (CXL. 1.) who forgetting thy all-ſeeing Eye, regards not by what means he plots my ruin: And therefore it will be beſt for you all, O ye men of blood, who have ſlain the Prieſts of the Lord, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 18.) and now thirſt after my life, to make your retreat, and deſiſt from perſecuting me any farther.

Ver. 20. *For they ſpeak againſt thee wickedly,* and *thine enemies take* thy name *in vain.*] For it is not ſo much me that they perſecute, as Vertue and Piety; to which, though they are not open, yet they are the moſt dangerous enemies, becauſe they make it ſerve their wicked ends: having godly pretences for their doing miſchief; and not ſticking (ſo little belief have they of thy Omniſcience) to call thee to witneſs the truth of their lies and calumnies.

Ver. 21. *Do not I hate them, O* Lord, *that hate thee? and am not I grieved with thoſe that riſe up againſt thee?*] And have I not reaſon then, O Lord, to hate thoſe who have ſuch an inveterate hatred unto Thee? and to take the greateſt diſtaſte to them, that oppoſe themſelves ſo induſtriouſly to thy holy Laws?

Ver. 22. *I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.*] I deteſt them with all my heart; and as their impiety is the only cauſe of it, ſo I cannnot loath them more than I do: but declare my ſelf upon that account, to be their utter enemy.

Ver. 23. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.*] If I have any other ground of my enmity, or am guilty of ſo much as deſigning any evil to them, merely becauſe they have done ſo much evil to me; I deſire to find it out, and ſubmit my ſelf to the ſevereſt trials, which may diſcover to me any ſuch thought that lurketh in my heart.

Ver. 24. *And ſee if* there be any *wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting.*] For I would not continue in ſuch a pernicious courſe: But if in any thing I do, I intend them any hurt, or ſo much as to be grievous to them; my humble requeſt is, either that I may not live, or live more exactly by the unchangeable rules of righteouſneſs, ſincerity and truth.

PSALM CXL.

To the chief Muſician. A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT

There is no doubt (for the Title aſcribes it to him) but this Pſalm was made by David. *And it is little leſs undoubted that he compoſed it (as* Theodoret *well judges) when he was perſecuted by* Saul; *who was inſtigated thereunto by the calumnies of* Doeg, *and the information of the* Ziphites: *whoſe falſeneſs and peſtilent malice he here deſcribes; beſeeching* God *to preſerve him from the miſchief they intended him, and to turn it upon themſelves: as he reſts aſſured He would. When he came to his Kingdom, and had ſettled the ſervice of* God *in that manner, which we read* 1 Chron. *XVI, XXIII,* &c. *he delivered it to the Maſter of the Muſick; to be ſung at certain times in the Tabernacle. But it was not found, I ſuppoſe, (no more than the* two *foregoing, and the* four *following) till ſome time after the other Books of Pſalms were publiſhed; and ſo were placed here all together, by him that collected this Book.*

1. *Deliver me, O* Lord, *from the evil man: preſerve me from the violent man.*] Defeat, O Lord, the wicked deſigns of that naughty man, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 9. *&c.*) who makes no conſcience of what he ſaith or doeth, to compaſs his ends: and let me not fall into the hands of that injurious Prince, (XXIII. 7.) whom I have never wronged; but done him faithful ſervice.

Ver. 2. *Which imagine miſchief in* their *hearts; continually are they gathered together* for *war.*] They are zealouſly bent to do me all the miſchief they are able: which they ſtudiouſly plot, and do nothing all the day but contrive how to oppreſs me with armed force; which in ſeveral places they have laid to intercept me.

Ver. 3. *They have ſharpned their tongues like a ſerpent; adders poiſon* is *under their lips. Selah.*] And they have ſo traduced me by their calumnies, and falſe accuſations, that they have already given my reputation a deadly wound: for the tongue of the Serpent, or the teeth of the Adder or Viper, doth not more effectually

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convey their poiſon into mens bodies; than they have infuſed theſe venomous ſlanders into the peoples minds.

Ver. 4. *Keep me, O* Lord, *from the hands of the wicked, preſerve me from the violent man, who have purpoſed to overthrow my goings.*] And therefore I moſt humbly again beſeech Thee, O Lord, to keep me from falling into the power of that naughty man, (Ver. 1.) who inſtigates his Prince to the moſt injurious proceedings againſt me: Be thou my Preſerver, O Lord; for otherwiſe I ſhall never eſcape the trains they have deviſed and laid, to ſupplant and utterly undo me.

Ver. 5. *The proud have hid a ſnare for me, and cords, they have ſpread a net by the way ſide: they have ſet gins for me. Selah.*] There is no hunter or fowler more induſtrious and cunning in laying ſnares and toils, in ſpreading nets, or ſetting gins and traps for the beaſts or the birds in the places which they are wont to frequent; than they are to trace me in all my motions, (1 *Sam.* XXII. 23.) and to invent all manner of wiles and ſubtle arts, to ſurpriſe me: which they proudly preſume will have their deſired ſucceſs.

Ver. 6. *I ſaid unto thee* Lord, *Thou* art *my* God: *hear the voice of my ſupplications, O* Lord.] To which I have neither cunning nor power of my own to oppoſe, no Friend whoſe aid I can implore; but only commend my ſelf unto the Lord, ſaying; I have always owned thee for my Protector, and thou haſt hitherto owned me, and been my merciful Deliverer: Do not now, O Lord of all power and might, deny my earneſt requeſt; who depend on thee alone for ſuccour.

Ver. 7. *O* God *the* Lord, *the ſtrength of my ſalvation; thou haſt covered my head in the day of battel.*] O moſt mighty Lord, whom no Creature whatſoever can withſtand; O Thou who diſpoſeſt of all events; I again profeſs, that I look for ſafety from thy Almighty Power alone: by which I was protected (having no other helmet or armour, but only that, 1 *Sam.* XVII. 39, 40, 50.) in the day when I fought with *Goliath.*

Ver. 8. *Grant not, O* Lord, *the deſires of the wicked, further not his wicked device,* leſt *they exalt themſelves. Selah.*] Suffer not him, O moſt mighty Lord, who now ſeeks my deſtruction, to effect his deſire; let him not ſucceed in any of his miſchievous deſigns and projects againſt me: leſt he and his Partakers grow ſo inſolent, as to dare to attempt all manner of violence againſt other Innocents.

Ver. 9. As for *the head of thoſe that compaſs me about, let the miſchief of their own lips cover them.*] Let the poiſonous and pernicious calumnies of thoſe that now beſet me round, retort upon themſelves: and let them be overwhelmed by thoſe very devices, which with laborious lyes they have contrived for my ruin.

Ver. 10. *Let burning coals fall upon them, let them be caſt into the fire; into deep pits, that they riſe not up again.*] Let their ſlanders (which I can compare to nothing better than burning coals that are not eaſily quenched) be the inſtruments of their own deſtruction: let them periſh in the flames, which they themſelves have kindled; and be irrecoverably thrown headlong into thoſe dangers and miſchiefs, which, like dreadful deep pits they prepared for my deſtruction.

Ver. 11. *Let not an evil ſpeaker be eſtabliſhed in the earth: evil ſhall hunt the violent man to overthrow* him.] This I am confident ſhall be their portion; for, tho' a falſe Informer may for a time be believed, and thrive by his lyes and ſlanders, yet Truth will at laſt prevail; and not ſuffer him to eſtabliſh his greatneſs by ſuch baſe and wicked practices: And as little ſhall violence and injuſtice avail him that relies upon it; but bring upon him one evil after another; which ſhall purſue him to his ruin; as the hounds do the wild beaſt, which, after all its windings and turnings, becomes a prey unto them.

Ver. 12. *I know that the* Lord *will maintain the cauſe of the afflicted,* and *the right of the poor.*] For I am ſure the Lord, who is ſtronger than all, will aſſert the cauſe of the Oppreſſed; and do right to thoſe who are deſtitute of humane help; by puniſhing all that are injurious to them.

Ver. 13. *Surely the righteous ſhall give thanks unto thy name; the upright ſhall dwell in thy preſence.*] Let the righteous rely on this as an undoubted truth, that they ſhall give thanks to thy Almighty Goodneſs, for appearing in their vindication; and, when theſe falſe and violent men ſhall be extinct, they that are ſincerely honeſt ſhall remain in thy favour; and receive the marks of it, in thy conſtant care and providence over them.

PSALM CXLI.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

If the Title had not told us that David *was the Author of this Pſalm, the matter of it would have led our minds to think of him, and of his many ſufferings, during the perſecution of* Saul. *Which he prays to* God (*as* Theodoret *obſerves upon the third and fourth Verſes*) *he may be able to bear ſo patiently; that it may not exaſperate his ſpirit to ſpeak irreverently of* Saul; *much leſs to do him any miſchief: but leave it unto* God, *to take his enemies in the ſnare they had laid for him.*

No body need wonder, that there are ſo many prayers found upon the ſame Subject; for that perſecution endured long, and they were made upon different occaſions, or to different purpoſes: and if they had been all to the ſame purpoſe, it would not have been ſtrange to him that conſiders the pious diſpoſition of David; *who loved to ſpend his time in ſuch devout Meditations. And this ſeems to have been compoſed about the time of the offering of the evening Sacrifice,* Ver. 2. *when his afflictions*

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alſo preſſed him ſorely, that they tempted him to ſpeak ſomething which was ἐν ὑποψίᾳ *(as* Theodoret's *phraſe is) unbecoming* God's *Anointed* (Saul) *and the profeſſion he made of duty to him.*

1. LORD, *I cry unto thee, make haſte unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.*] The danger wherein I am, O Lord, is exceeding great, (1 *Sam.* XXIII. 25. or XXIV. 1, 2.) which makes me double my cries, and beſeech thee the more importunately, ſpeedily to ſuccour me (when my diſtreſſes call for it) with ſeaſonable relief.

Ver. 2. *Let my prayer be ſet forth before thee* as *incenſe*; and *the lifting up of my hands*, as *the evening ſacrifice.*] Though I am now in a Wilderneſs, and thereby diſabled from offering thee any other Sacrifice but my Prayers; yet they ſhall be as acceptable to thee, as if they were accompanied with the ſweeteſt Odours: and my fervent devotion in them, with intire dependence on thee alone for help, be as prevalent, as if I could now preſent thee, at the Tabernacle, with an evening Oblation.

Ver. 3. *Set a watch, O* Lord, *before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.*] And in the firſt place, I humbly deſire thee, O Lord, to lay ſuch reſtraints upon my tongue, and to enable me ſo vigilantly to obſerve all the motions of it; that none of the troubles I endure, though never ſo grievous, may make me burſt out into any intemperate ſpeeches: which may give a juſt offence unto them that perſecute me.

Ver. 4. *Incline not my heart to* any *evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.*] Yea, govern all the motions of my will ſo ſteadily, that I may not liſten to evil counſels (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 4, 6, 7.) much leſs engage with men, who have no regard to right and juſtice in any evil practices; but alway refuſe to partake in their deſigns; though invited with the ſpecious promiſes of the greateſt felicity.

Ver. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me*, it ſhall be *a kindneſs*; *and let him reprove me*, it ſhall be *an excellent oil which ſhall not break my head: for yet my prayer alſo* ſhall be *in their calamities.*] I had rather much that a righteous man ſhould give me a ſevere rebuke, than be inticed by evil doers to accompany them in their ſins; For it will do me a real kindneſs, and be ſo far from giving me any vexation, that it will be as acceptable to me as the moſt excellent ointments are unto the head; and only make me continue my prayers with the greater earneſtneſs, that I may not run into thoſe miſchievous courſes, from which I am deterred by their pious reproofs and admonitions.

Ver. 6. *When their judges are overthrown in ſtony places, they ſhall hear my words, for they are ſweet.*] The effect of which their greateſt Rulers have ſeen, when, being left by their Maſter on the ſides of the Rock, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 2, 3.) while he went into a hole of it to uncover his feet, they heard that I ſpeak not a reviling word (much leſs did I ſtretch out my hand againſt him) but in the mildeſt and moſt dutiful language addreſſed my ſelf unto him, 1 *Sam.* XXIV. 8, 9, *&c.*

Ver. 7. *Our bones are ſcattered at the graves mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth* wood *upon the earth.*] And yet this gentleneſs hath been ſo far from mollifying their hearts, that they ſtill perſecute me, and the ſmall body of men that follow me: (1 *Sam.* XXVI. 2. XXVII. 1.) whom they have reduced to ſuch extremities, that like the earth when it is ploughed up, we break in pieces; and are ready to diſperſe and flee for our lives, with little hope of ſafety.

Ver. 8. *But mine eyes* are *unto thee, O* God *the* Lord: *in thee is my truſt, leave not my ſoul deſtitute.*] But in this ſore diſtreſs I fix my thoughts on thee, O mighty Lord, the Governor of all things; in whom I repoſe an aſſured confidence that Thou wilt not abandon me to the malice of thoſe that ſeek to take away my life from me.

Ver. 9. *Keep me from the ſnare* which *they have laid for me, and the grins of the workers of iniquity.*] Preſerve me, I beſeech thee, from all the ſubtle plots which they have laid to deſtroy me: and though they ſtick at nothing (though never ſo unjuſt) and have various arts to blind the world and hide their perfidious deſigns; ſuffer me not to be inſnared by them.

Ver. 10. *Let the wicked fall into their own nets: whilſt that I withal eſcape.*] But let all the contrivances of ſuch wicked Men prove pernicious to themſelves; and bring upon them the evils which they intended me: whilſt I, and they that are with me, by thy care of us, eſcape untouched by any of them.

PSALM CXLII.

Maſchil of David. A Prayer when he was in the Cave.

ARGUMENT.

When David *bid himſelf for fear of* Saul, *in the Cave of* Adullam, (1 Sam. *XXII.* 1.) *or as others think, more probable in the Cave of* Engaddi, (1 Sam. *XXIV.* 1, 2, 3.) *this was the meditation he had in that diſconſolate place, before* Saul *came thither to uncover his feet in it. Which was ſet afterward to the tune of* Maſchil, (*ſee* Pſal. *XXXII.*) *or called by that name, becauſe it admirably inſtructs Poſterity in the moſt forlorn, nay deſperate condition, to recommend themſelves to* God, *and to depend on him with a reſolved Faith. Who, by an unexpected means, granted the deſire of* David, *which he makes in the concluſion of this Pſalm, (ver. 7.) and brought him out of thoſe ſtraits wherein he was impriſoned. I ſay,* reſolved Faith; *becauſe in the Hebrew, the words of the* firſt *and* ſecond *verſes run thus*; I will cry unto the Lord; I will make my ſupplication; I will pour out my complaint before him, *&c.*

1. *I cried*

1. *I Cried unto the* LORD *with my voice: with my voice unto the* LORD *did I make my ſupplication.*] Though I am deſtitute of humane help, I will not deſpair of ſafety; but with the more fervent cries implore the divine ſuccour: and with vehement ſighs and groans, deprecate the LORD's diſpleaſure.

Ver. 2. *I poured out my complaint before him: I ſhewed before him my trouble.*] I will lay before him at large, all the ſad thoughts which perplex my heart: and repreſenting the inextricable ſtraits and difficulties wherein I am, expoſe my ſelf unto him; as an object of his pity.

Ver. 3. *When my ſpirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knoweſt my path: in the way wherein I walked, have they privily laid a ſnare for me.*] Now that I am utterly at a loſs, and ready to faint away in a confuſion of thoughts, Thou knoweſt very well a way for my eſcape: though by the intelligence they hold with my Enemies, (1 *Sam.* XXIV. 1.) they have block'd up all the Paſſages which I am acquainted withal; and laid Ambuſhes for me in every Road.

Ver. 4. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but* there was *no man that would know me, refuge failed me; no man cared for my ſoul.*] Look about thee, O my Soul, and ſee if thou canſt ſpy any hope of relief from thy beſt and moſt powerful Friends: there are none of them that dare own thee; nor do I know whither to fly for ſafety, if any of them would be ſo kind as to invent a means, and open a way for my deliverance from the preſent danger.

Ver. 5. *I cried unto thee, O* LORD, *I ſaid, Thou* art *my refuge,* and *my portion in the land of the living.*] All that I can do, is to recommend my ſelf to Thee, O LORD, by fervent Prayers, ſaying; I truſt my ſelf with thy Almighty Goodneſs, as in a ſure Sanctuary: I have nothing elſe in the World to depend upon, but Thee alone; by whom I will hope to be protected and provided for, as long as I live.

Ver. 6. *Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low: deliver me from my perſecutors, for they are ſtronger than I.*] O let my importunate cry prevail for ſome relief, which will come moſt ſeaſonably in this exceeding great neceſſity: reſcue me now, that I may not fall into the hands of my Perſecutors; who are every way (except in theſe cries unto, and confidence in Thee) much too ſtrong for me.

Ver. 7. *Bring my ſoul out of priſon, that I may praiſe thy name: the righteous ſhall compaſs me about; for thou ſhalt deal bountifully with me.*] Bring me, with life and liberty, out of this diſmal cave, wherein I am pent up; that I may make my thankful acknowledgments to thy almighty goodneſs: which ſhall attract the admiration of all good Men, and provoke them unanimouſly to join together with me, in praiſing thee; when they ſee that thou art the moſt righteous Judge, and bountiful Benefactor of thoſe that commit themſelves unto thee.

PSALM CXLIII.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

To the Title of A Pſalm of David, Theodoret *ſays be found, in ſome Greek Copies, theſe words added (to explain the time of its compoſition)* when Abſalom his Son perſecuted him. *Which he confeſſes was not then in the Hebrew (no more than it is now) nor in other Interpreters of the Pſalms; but agrees well enough, he thinks, with the truth of the ſtory. So he that was the Author of the* vulgar Latin *thought alſo: though there are ſome paſſages in the Pſalm, which ſound as if it had been made during the perſecution of* Saul; *at ſome time, when he was in the like diſtreſs with that deſcribed in the foregoing. For* Ver. 3, 4. *he uſes ſome of the ſame expreſſions which we find there; and repreſents himſelf as in danger to be buried in ſome ſuch Cave as that mentioned in the laſt Verſe of* Pſalm *CXLII; where he begs, as he doth here, for a ſpeedy deliverance. Yet, for all this, there are other paſſages which will incline us to adhere to the forenamed Addition; and apply the Pſalm to his flight from* Abſalom. *For then it was he had moſt reaſon to fear, leſt* GOD *ſhould deal with him according to his ſins: which he deprecates (*Ver. 2.*) with ſuch a deep ſenſe of his unworthineſs, that it hath made this to be numbred among the penetential Pſalms, and is the laſt of them. The memory alſo of* GOD's *former deliverances of him, a great while before* (Ver. 5.) *may well refer to what he had done for him, not only againſt* Saul, *but before he knew him: which as he doth not forget, ſo he hoped the* LORD *would now remember, and grant him the like again, when he was in the like diſtreſſes.*

1. *HEar my prayer, O* LORD, *give ear to my ſupplications: in thy faithfulneſs anſwer me,* and *in thy righteouſneſs.*] I renew my requeſts and my earneſt ſupplications unto Thee, O LORD, for ſome relief, in theſe new ſtraits and difficulties into which I am fall'n: hoping, though I am very unworthy, yet in thy abundant mercy, thou wilt faithfully fulfil the Promiſes thou haſt made to me.

Ver. 2. *And enter not into judgment with thy ſervant: for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.*] My ſins indeed (2 *Sam.* XII. 9, 10, 11.) have juſtly brought theſe troubles upon me; but I humbly beſeech Thee to own me ſtill for thy Servant, and not to call me unto a ſevere account for what I have done amiſs; but to deal favourably with me: For if thou ſhouldſt proceed according to the rigiour of the Law, the beſt Man living (much leſs ſo great a Sinner as I) will not be acquitted at thy Tribunal.

Ver. 3. *For the enemy hath perſecuted my ſoul, he hath ſmitten my life down to the ground: he hath made me to dwell in darkneſs, as thoſe*

that have been long dead.] And I am not ſo bad, but my Enemy that perſecutes me is far worſe: who without any provocation ſeeks my life, and hath already utterly deſpoiled me of all the comforts of it, (2 *Sam.* XV. 13.) and forced me to ſeek my ſafety in holes and obſcure places, in the Wilderneſs, (XVII. 16.) where I ſeem to be buried alive, without any hope of a reſurrection.

Ver. 4. *Therefore is my ſpirit overwhelmed within me: my heart within me is deſolate.*] Which as it calls to mind the diſtreſs wherein I was, when in my flight from *Saul* I hid my ſelf in Caves (ſee CXLII. 3.) ſo it hath the ſame effect upon me; for I am ready to ſwoon away in this great perplexity; which hath ſtruck me with ſuch aſtoniſhment, that I have no ſtrength remaining in me.

Ver. 5. *I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works: I muſe on the work of thy hands.*] Till I call to mind, withal, not only what thou didſt for me in that former Perſecution; but long before in my younger days, when I was delivered by Thee from the greateſt dangers, (1 *Sam.* XVII. 34, *&c.*) on theſe wonderful works I meditate; and conſider with my ſelf, that not by my own ſtrength, but by thy ſtupendious power, I was then preſerved.

Ver. 6. *I ſtretch forth my hands unto thee: my ſoul* thirſteth *after thee, as a thirſty land.* Selah.] And then I feel my fainting Spirits return again; and though I deſpair of human help, I make my Prayer unto Thee, with a chearful confidence for thy relief; which I long for, and expect with as eager deſire, as the parched ground gaſps for a refreſhing ſhower.

Ver. 7. *Hear me ſpeedily, O* Lord, *my ſpirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, leſt I be like unto them that go down into the pit.*] Do not delay it, O Lord, I moſt earneſtly beſeech Thee; for I am not able to hold out much longer in this great extremity: deny not my humble requeſt, leſt I be utterly loſt (as I am in danger) without all hope of recovery, 2 *Sam.* XVII. 16.

Ver. 8. *Cauſe me to hear thy loving-kindneſs in the morning, for in thee do I truſt: cauſe me to know the way wherein I ſhould walk; for I lift up my ſoul unto thee.*] Tho' this night be very ſad, yet let me hear (according to the confidence I repoſe in thy mercy) better News, and ſee my Affairs in a more comfortable poſture in the morning, (2 *Sam.* XVII. 22, 23.) ſhew me which way I ſhall direct my courſe, and provide for my ſafety, (v. 24, 27.) for I depend entirely upon Thee.

Ver. 9. *Deliver me, O* Lord, *from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.*] Let me not fall into the hand of my Enemies; from whom I am now flying: but know not whither to go, but only to thee, for ſhelter and protection.

Ver. 10. *Teach me to do thy will, for thou* art *my* God, *thy Spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightneſs.*] Whoſe guidance I beſeech, as well as defence, that I may do nothing (no not for my preſervation) but what is perfectly agreeable to thy Laws; for thy Favour is my ſecurity, which I know is not otherways to be obtained: and therefore I deſire the conduct of thy good Spirit (which is ready to aſſiſt thoſe that ſeek it) as well to lead me in the plain path of juſtice and piety, as to ſuggeſt to me the ways and means of eſcaping the ſnares of my Enemies; and of coming into an honeſt country, where I may be free from the fear of being betrayed to them.

Ver. 11. *Quicken me, O* Lord, *for thy names ſake: for thy righteouſneſs ſake bring my ſoul out of trouble.*] I have nothing to move Thee to it, but only the honour it will be unto thy Majeſty; in reſpect to which I hope, O Lord, Thou wilt preſerve me from periſhing, and reſtore me again to thy Kingdom: For though my ſtraits are ſo great, that my life is in extream danger, yet nothing can hinder the performance of thy juſt and faithful promiſe to me.

Ver. 12. *And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and deſtroy all them that afflict my ſoul: for I* am *thy ſervant.*] Thy mercy alſo ſurpaſſes all the malice of my Enemies; whom I truſt Thou wilt cut off, and deſtroy, rather than let me continue in theſe hazards: for I am thy Miniſter, and though never ſo unworthy, am appointed by Thee to govern thy people; in which office I will do Thee all faithful ſervice.

PSALM CXLIV.

A Pſalm of *David.*

ARGUMENT.

The Inſcription will not let us doubt, that David *was the Author of this Pſalm: but that it was a Triumph after his victory over* Goliath *(as the* vulgar Latin *hath it) is aſſerted without ground. For though ſome Greek Copies have ſuch an addition to the Inſcription; yet* Theodoret *ſays, that as he could not find it in the Hebrew, ſo it was not to be met withal in any other Interpreters; no not in the LXX. in the* Hexaplus. *And it plainly appears by the* ſecond *Verſe, that it was compoſed after he came to the Kingdom: and not then, till he had got ſome victories over thoſe that oppoſed him. Nay, there are ſo many expreſſions here, like to thoſe we meet withal in the XVIII. Pſalm; that it hath inclined ſome to think it was made at the ſame time, and for the ſame purpoſe with that: of which it looks like a compendium, and might be intended for a ſhort form of thankſgiving, for his deliverance from all his Enemies. But if the expreſſions be carefully examined, their opinion will appear to be truer, who think it was compoſed, not after* God *had given him reſt from all his Enemies; but after thoſe two victories over the* Philiſtines, *mentioned* 2 Sam. *V. if not before them: For as he ſtill mentions more oppoſers who were unſubdued,* v. 7, 11; *ſo he doth not ſay, as in the XVIII. Pſalm, that* God *had caſt forth lightnings, and ſhot his arrows againſt them,* &c. *but deſires him here* (v. 5, 6.) *that he would appear in that manner*

manner for him: acknowledging that not only his Kingdom, but his Courage, his Victories, and Succeſſes were all to be aſcribed unto GOD.

BLeſſed be the LORD *my ſtrength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.*] Praiſed be the LORD, by me and by all men elſe; by whom I have been kept in ſafety, as in an impregnable fortreſs: and who hath given me both ſtrength and skill to handle my Arms, whenſoever I ingaged, either in ſingle combate or in battles.

Ver. 2. *My goodneſs and my fortreſs, my high tower, and my deliverer, my ſhield, and he in whom I truſt: who ſubdueth my people under me.*] I ever found Him very merciful unto me, when I was in any danger; for He ſtill preſerved me as in a ſtrong hold; nay, ſet me out of the reach of the moſt potent Enemies; either making a way for my eſcape when they ſurrounded me, or protecting me in their moſt furious aſſaults upon me: and as I repoſed a conſtant truſt in Him, ſo He hath never failed my expectation; but after long conteſts, made all *Iſrael* ſubmit themſelves unto my Empire, 2 *Sam.* V. 1, *&c.*

Ver. 3. LORD, *what is man, that thou takeſt knowledge of him? or the ſon of man, that thou makeſt account of him?*] I am aſtoniſhed, O LORD, at this thy wonderful Goodneſs; and know not what to ſay, but only admire that thou ſhould'ſt take ſuch care of ſo poor a thing as man is, at the beſt: eſpecially of me, a miſerable wretch; whom thou haſt honoured with moſt glorious Succeſſes.

Ver. 4. *Man is like to vanity: his days are as a ſhadow that paſſeth away.*] Man, alas! is but a breath, which preſently vaniſhes: what a marvel is it then, that I ſhould have ſtrength to atchieve ſuch things? his life is exceeding ſhort and uncertain; and yet, ſuch is thy ſtupendious Goodneſs, I am not only alive, notwithſtanding all the hazards through which I have run; but in a little time have performed ſuch memorable acts, that the fame of them will laſt for ever.

Ver. 5. *Bow thy heavens, O* LORD, *and come down: touch the mountains, and they ſhall ſmoke.*] Proceed, O LORD, to perfect my conqueſt, and now that new Enemies are combined againſt me, (2 *Sam.* VIII.) let thy Majeſty appear as it hath done formerly (ſee *Pſal.* XVIII. 9.) for my aſſiſtance and defence: and as ſoon as the proudeſt oppoſers feel that thou art preſent, they will vaniſh away like ſmoak.

Ver. 6. *Caſt forth lightning and ſcatter them: ſhoot out thine arrows and deſtroy them.*] Let them be diſperſed by flaſhes of Lightning in their faces: and ſo terrified with Thunder and Hail, that they may not be able to recollect their Forces.

Ver. 7. *Send thine hand from above, rid me, and deliver me out of great waters; from the hand of ſtrange children:*] Send powerful aid unto me from Heaven, (*Pſalm* XVIII. 16.) for I rely upon nothing on Earth: relieve me in all my ſtraits; and deliver me out of theſe great and manifold dangers, wherewith I am threatned, by a foreign power of Idolatrous people, which now invade me:

Ver. 8. *Whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity: and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.*] Who, as they have been wont to brag of more than they do, ſo promiſe more than they will ever perform: For whatſoever treaties of peace and leagues of friendſhip I make with them, they break them all; and falſify ſo ſhamefully both their words and their oaths, that there is no truſt to be given to them, (v. 11.)

Ver. 9. *I will ſing a new ſong unto thee, O* GOD: *upon a pſaltery,* and *an inſtrument of ten ſtrings will I ſing praiſes unto thee.*] I will never prove ungrateful to thee, for ſo great a benefit: but here ſolemnly vow to compoſe, with my beſt skill, new Hymns of thanks unto thee, O GOD; and with the uſual inſtruments of Muſick ſing thy Praiſes, ſaying;

Ver. 10. It is he *that giveth ſalvation to kings, who delivereth David his ſervant from the hurtful ſword.*] It is not merely by the conduct and valour of our Captains and Soldiers that we have overcome; but the moſt powerful Kings owe their ſafety, and their victories unto the LORD: To whom I am more particularly bound; firſt for the high honour he hath done me, in making me his Miniſter; and now for this deliverance from theſe mighty Armies, which threaten my deſtruction, 2 *Sam.* VIII.

Ver. 11. *Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of ſtrange children, whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity: and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.*] Grant my renewed requeſts therefore, I beſeech the (v. 7, 8.) and ſend me ſeaſonable relief and deliverance from this foreign invaſion of an Idolatrous people: who have no faith nor honeſty; but ſhamefully falſify both their words and their oaths; and when they ſhake hands with others, as if they were their Friends, intend thereby to deceive them.

Ver. 12. *That our ſons* may be *as plants grown up in their youth,* that *our daughters* may be *as corner ſtones, poliſhed* after *the ſimilitude of a palace:*] Let not our Country be overrun by ſuch Barbarians; but be ſo preſerved by thee in peace and tranquillity, that our hopeful Sons may grow up like young flouriſhing Trees, till they attain their full ſtrength and ſtature, and our Daughters be tall and beautiful, like thoſe poliſhed Pillars, which are the ornaments of a royal Palace.

Ver. 13. That *our garners* may be *full, affording all manner of ſtore,* that *our ſheep may bring forth thouſands, and ten thouſands in our ſtreets.*] Our Granaries alſo and Storehouſes being as full as they can hold, may afford us all ſorts of Proviſion from year to year: and our flocks of Sheep bring forth thouſands; which may multiply into ten thouſands, in their walks.

Ver. 14. *That our oxen* may be *ſtrong to labour; that* there be *no breaking in, nor going out; that* there be *no complaining in our ſtreets.*] Our Cows alſo, being great with young, may neither be driven away by the irruption of

our

our Enemies; nor caſt their Calves at home: but we may be free from this, and all other cauſes of crying, or complaining in our ſtreets.

Ver. 15. *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe: yea, happy is that people, whoſe* God *is the* Lord.] Happy is that Nation, which is ſettled in ſuch a proſperous condition! That is, happy is that Nation, which truly worſhips the Great Lord of the World; who hath promiſed (*Deut.* XXVIII.) to bleſs his faithful ſervants, with theſe, and all other fruits of his love.

PSALM CXLV.

David's Pſalm of Praiſe.

ARGUMENT.

After David *had obtained thoſe favours of* God *for himſelf and for the Nation, which he begs in the foregoing Pſalm; he compoſed (according to his promiſe there,* Ver. 9) *this admirable Hymn: which is contrived with ſuch Art, that, it is manifeſt from thence, he made it when he was much at leiſure; and* God *had given him reſt from all his enemies: (*2 Sam. *VII.* 1.) *For every Verſe begins with a new Letter of the Alphabet in order: which are all here, except the Letter* Nun; *which is wanting,* Ver. 13. *I ſuppoſe it was loſt, when this Pſalm came to the hands of the Collector of this Book: and he would not adventure to ſupply it, with one of his own inventing. The* Greek *indeed (that is, the preſent Greek Copies; for* Theodotion, *and* Aquila, *and the ancient* LXX. *had it not) and* Latin *and* Arabick *(which in effect are but one and the ſame) have another Verſe which we may well think, if it ever were in the* Hebrew, *began with that Letter* Nun: *But it differs ſo little from the ſeventeenth Verſe (when there is no repetition, in any other part of the Pſalm) that it doth not in my opinion, look like the true original Verſe. And it may be doubted, whether there ever was any ſuch Verſe in that place (where we ſuppoſe one wanting) for the Pſalmiſt might be carried (ſee* Pſalm *XXV.) by the ſtrength of the inſpiration, which was upon him, out of the method he had at firſt propoſed to himſelf.*

Certain it is this Pſalm was always eſteemed ſo excellent, that the Title of the whole Book of Pſalms is taken from this; which is wholly ſpent in praiſing God, *with ſuch admirable devotion; that the ancient* Hebrews *were wont to ſay (as* Valentine Schindler *hath long ago obſerved)* He could not fail to be a child of the world to come, who would ſay this Pſalm three times every day. *And for that reaſon perhaps it was compoſed Alphabetically; that ſo uſeful a Pſalm might be the more eaſily learnt, and remembred by every body.*

1. *I Will extol thee, my* God, *O King, and I will bleſs thy name for ever and ever.*] I will proclaim to all the world, O my God, the ſupreme Governour of Heaven and Earth, how excellent thy Majeſty is; infinitely ſurpaſſing the higheſt of our thoughts: and will never ceaſe to expreſs the delightful ſenſe I have of all thy glorious Attributes; whereby thou art made known unto us.

Ver. 2. *Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy name for ever and ever.*] This ſhall be my daily employment; and I will ſing joyful Hymns in praiſe of thy glorious perfections, without any end.

Ver. 3. *Great is the* Lord, *and greatly to be praiſed; and his greatneſs is unſearchable.*] For the Lord is immenſely great, in power and dominion, and all other ways, and therefore to be honoured with our higheſt, and with our endleſs praiſes: But when we have ſaid all we can, our beſt praiſe of Him will be, to confeſs that his tranſcendent excellencies cannot be comprehended.

Ver. 4. *One generation ſhall praiſe thy works to another, and ſhall declare thy mighty acts.*] For there are none of thy works, which we ſee, that we are able to underſtand; but, though this Age tranſmit its obſervations to the next, and that recommend the ſtudy of them to poſterity, yet ſtill we are ignorant and cannot praiſe them enough: no, nor ſufficiently declare the prodigious acts of thy miraculous Providence, for the preſervation of thy people, which ſhall be perpetually commemorated.

Ver. 5. *I will ſpeak of the glorious honour of thy majeſty, and of thy wondrous works.*] It ſhall be my buſineſs, in this preſent age, to ſpeak of the dazling ſplendour and beauty of thy Majeſty: which I want words to expreſs, but appears in thy ſtupendious works.

Ver. 6. *And* men *ſhall ſpeak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatneſs.*] Which they that come after ſhall rehearſe; and from the narratives that I ſhall make of thy magnificent greatneſs, declare to their poſterity, what dreadful things were done by thy irreſiſtible power, for the ſubverſion of our enemies.

Ver. 7. *They ſhall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodneſs, and ſhall ſing of thy righteouſneſs.*] And with the ſame diligence ſhall they continue the conſtant memory of thy numerous benefits to us: which they ſhall no more ceaſe to celebrate with their praiſes, than a ſpring doth to pour out water; but publiſh, in their perpetual Hymns, how juſt and faithful thou art to thy word.

Ver. 8. *The* Lord *is gracious, and full of compaſſion; ſlow to anger and of great mercy.*] For the Lord (this ſhall be the ſubject of their, and of my Song) is exceeding propenſe to do us good; and very indulgent when we do amiſs: which makes him that he doth not preſently puniſh, but rather chuſes to beſtow new and greater benefits upon us; if we repent of our faults.

Ver. 9. *The*

Ver. 9. *The* LORD *is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.*] Nor is his goodneſs confined unto us; but extends it ſelf in various acts of bounty to all mankind: who need not doubt of his kindneſs; when they ſee he takes ſo tender a care of all his Creatures.

Ver. 10. *All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, O* LORD, *and thy ſaints ſhall bleſs thee.*] Who all in their ſeveral kinds declare, O LORD, throughout all generations, how great, how wiſe, how powerful and provident thou art; which ſuch as we, who are particularly bound unto thee for ſpecial Favours beſtowed upon us, ought moſt ſenſibly to acknowledge with thankful praiſes.

Ver. 11. *They ſhall ſpeak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.*] It is their duty to diſcourſe of the incomparable wiſdom, and goodneſs, and care, which thou exerciſeſt in the government of the whole world; eſpecially of us: and to recount the memorable acts of thy invincible power among us.

Ver. 12. *To make known to the ſons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majeſty of his kingdom.*] That all mankind, who regard not ſuch things ſo much as they ought, may be made ſenſible how mighty the LORD is: and adore the amazing ſplendour of his illuſtrious works; and the admirable order he obſerves in his government of all things.

Ver. 13. *Thy kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and thy dominion* endureth *throughout all generations.*] Which as they are all intirely ſubject to him, ſo his Empire over them is immoveable; and neither ends nor decays: but when earthly Kingdoms fail, and are transferred from one to another, his dominion is ſtill the ſame throughout all ſucceſſions.

Ver. 14. *The* LORD *upholdeth all that fall, and raiſeth up all* thoſe that be *bowed down.*] In which he doth not neglect any of his ſubjects that depend upon him (as mortal Princes too frequently do) but ſupports and comforts the meaneſt of them, that are oppreſſed with grievous afflictions; and gives them a ſeaſonable deliverance: when they are in danger to ſink and periſh under the heavy weight of their burthens.

Ver. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon.*] He makes a conſtant proviſion alſo for them: which every Creature, when their neceſſities call for ſupply, daily receive from thee, O LORD; in the proper ſeaſon for it.

Ver. 16. *Thou openeſt thy hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.*] And thou art not ſparing of thy bleſſings; but diſpenſeſt them with ſuch a bountiful hand, that there are none of them live without ſatisfactions, but have all their appetites filled, by thy liberality, to the ſmalleſt of them.

Ver. 17. *The* LORD *is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*] And therefore let us not doubt, but thankfully acknowledge, that the LORD is not only juſt in all the diſpenſations of his Providence to us; (tho' perhaps we do not apprehend it) but exceeding merciful, and kind, in every thing that befalls us.

Ver. 18. *The* LORD *is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.*] We need do no more but piouſly commend our ſelves to him, and he will take care of us: for he is ready on all occaſions, to relieve every one that addreſſes himſelf unto him; with a ſincere heart, truly diſpoſed to be faithful to him.

Ver. 19. *He will fulfil the deſire of them that fear him: he alſo will hear their cry, and will ſave them.*] He that ſatisfies the appetite of all Creatures, (Ver. 16.) will not fail, we may be confident, to gratifie in their deſires, ſuch religious perſons as fear to offend him: But though he let them fall into troubles and ſtraits, in due time will be moved, by their importunate prayers, to ſend them a ſeaſonable deliverance.

Ver. 20. *The* LORD *preſerveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he deſtroy.*] For ſince they love him ſo well, that they had rather ſuffer any thing, than diſobey him; the LORD undoubtedly will preſerve them: and deſtroy all thoſe impious Men, who have no regard to his Laws; nor make any ſcruple to abuſe and oppreſs ſuch vertuous perſons.

Ver. 21. *My mouth ſhall ſpeak the praiſe of the* LORD: *and let all fleſh bleſs his holy name for ever and ever.*] For which, and all the reſt of his benefits, I will never ceaſe to ſing Hymns of praiſe unto the LORD: and let all mankind (remembring how weak and frail they are) join together with me in this employment, (as the greateſt ſupport, and comfort, and ſecurity they have) to bleſs his incomparable Goodneſs, and Power, and careful Providence, for ever and ever.

PSALM CXLVI.

Hallelujah.

ARGUMENT.

This Pſalm and the other four which follow, both begin and conclude with the word Hallelujah, *i. e. Praiſe ye the* LORD. *And therefore, might, if the Jews had pleaſed, have been called* The great Hallelujah: *being all of them exhortations and incitements to the people, to ſtir up themſelves to that heavenly employment, which this Pſalm recommends to them, from the conſideration of ſeveral of the Divine Excellencies: which make Him the proper object of our confidence in all conditions. The vulgar* Latin, *and the preſent* Greek *intitle it to* Haggai *and* Zechariah: *but there is no ſuch thing in the* Hebrew, *nor in other ancient interpreters, nor in the* LXX. *in the* Hexaplus, *as* Theodoret *tells us. And we might rather think it not unlikely to have been compoſed by* David; *when* Saul, *who at firſt had a great kindneſs for him, afterward turned his moſt bitter enemy; were it not for*

one word, viz. the mention of Sion; *which was not then in* David's *poſſeſſion. This it is poſſible inclined thoſe that made the foregoing Title to think it was not compoſed till after-times: and they could find none ſo likely as that after the Captivity: when they ſoon found it was in vain to rely upon the favour of Princes; ſome of which hindred the building of the Temple, as much as* Cyrus *at the firſt had furthered it. I ſhall not trouble the Reader with any other conjectures: but only note that the Eighth Verſe was moſt exactly and literally fulfilled in our* Lord Chriſt; *when he came to give Salvation to us.*

1. *Praiſe ye the* Lord. *Praiſe the* Lord, *O my ſoul.*] Stir up thy ſelf, O my Soul, to give the Lord, who gave being to all things, thoſe affectionate praiſes which are due unto him.

Ver. 2. *While I live will I praiſe the* Lord: *I will ſing praiſes unto my* God, *while I have any being.*] The beſt reſolution thou canſt make is this; I will praiſe the Lord all my life long: and never ceaſe to give thanks unto my God, who never ceaſes to beſtow his benefits on me.

Ver. 3. *Put not your truſt in princes, nor in the ſon of man, in whom* there is *no help.*] And let all mankind, if they would be happy, preſerve his favour, by being grateful to him; and not (with the neglect of his ſervice) court the favour of Princes, and ſettle upon them their dependence: For the greateſt King on Earth, though never ſo juſt, never ſo bountiful, as well as rich and powerful, is ſtill but a Man; who cannot be preſent every where when we are in danger, nor be able always to help us in our greateſt needs.

Ver. 4. *His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth: in that very day his thoughts periſh.*] For there is a time when he cannot help himſelf, nor by the whole power of his Empire keep his ſoul from leaving his body: nay, a ſmall accident may carry him away ſuddenly; and then a clod of earth can do as much as he, and whatſoever deſigns and projects he had laid, (for any Man's preferment, ſuppoſe) they all die together with him.

Ver. 5. *Happy* is he *that* hath *the* God *of Jacob for his help, whoſe hope is in the* Lord *his* God:] He, and he alone, is the truly happy Man, who expects help from the mighty God, by whom *Jacob* was fed all his life long, (*Gen.* XLVIII. 15.) who truſts to him that is Lord of the World; and hath made him his friend ſo much, that he can call him his God.

Ver. 6. *Which made heaven and earth, the ſea, and all that therein* is: *which keepeth truth for ever.*] For, as he never dies, ſo, their can be no defect in his power, nor want of his preſence in every place; the heavens, the earth and the ſea, and all that is in them, being his own works: and, as nothing can hinder him from doing what he pleaſes, ſo, he will never alter his mind, nor go back with his word; but faithfully keep his promiſes for ever, with thoſe that rely upon them.

Ver. 7. *Which executeth judgment for the oppreſſed, which giveth food to the hungry: the* Lord *looſeth the priſoners.*] There are innumerable inſtances of the careful Providence of this great King; who doth not ſlight or forget the cries of his grieved Subjects; but in due time aſſerts the right of thoſe who are oppreſſed, and can find no relief in other Courts of Judgment: He ſupplies alſo the needs of poor hungry Wretches, who are ready to famiſh: and is ſo gracious a Lord, that he ſets them at liberty who by unjuſt or pitileſs Men have been held in miſerable Captivity.

Ver. 8. *The* Lord *openeth* the eyes of *the blind: the* Lord *raiſeth* them that are *bowed down: the* Lord *loveth the righteous.*] The Lord ſends help, when there are no hopes of humane cure; for he reſtores ſight to the blind, (as we ſhall ſee moſt remarkably when the Lord *Chriſt* appears) and lifts up thoſe who are bowed together, by tedious weakneſſes, (*Luke* XIII. 11.) or cruſh'd under other inſupportable burthens: and above all, the Lord delights to do good to them who have done good to others.

Ver. 9. *The* Lord *preſerveth the ſtrangers; he relieveth the fatherleſs and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upſide down.*] The friendleſs ſtrangers are preſerved by the Lord, from thoſe injuries which Men are apt to do them; when they commit themſelves to his protection: And ſo do the diſconſolate Widows and fatherleſs Children find ſupport and relief from him, againſt the injuſtice and violence of their wicked oppreſſours; whoſe deſigns and practices he utterly confoundeth.

Ver. 10. *The* Lord *ſhall reign for ever, even thy* God, *O Sion, unto all generations. Praiſe ye the* Lord.] Be of good comfort then, O ye inhabitants of *Sion*, who ſincerely worſhip this great Lord, that doth all theſe wondrous things: For his power and authority never fails; but from age to age will ever ſuccour thoſe pious ſouls, who are deſtitute of humane help: therefore praiſe perpetually this everlaſting King.

PSALM CXLVII.

Hallelujah. *See* CXLVI.

ARGUMENT.

Saint Chryſoſtom *and* Theodoret *think this Pſalm hath reſpect to the return of the Jewiſh Nation from the Captivity of* Babylon; *and the inſtauration of* Jeruſalem, *which followed upon it. And the* ſecond *and* thirteenth *Verſes may well incline us to be of the opinion, that it was made by ſome holy man at that time,* (Haggai *or* Zachariah *ſome ancient Interpreters imagin, or rather* Nehemiah, *who built the Walls and ſet up the Gates*) *eſpecially if we obſerve that there are ſome phraſes in it which favour of the* Chaldæan *language. And though this can be no more than a conjecture; yet it is very certain and evident that in that deliverance,*

rance, GOD *gave such illustrious proofs of his power, wisdom, mercy and justice, as the Psalmist here exhorts the people to celebrate with their thankful praises. I shall follow it therefore in my Praphrase; it being reasonable to suppose that devout persons would be as forward to acknowledge the wonderful Providence of* GOD *in their restauration, as they were to bewail (which they do* Psal. CXXXVII.) *the ruin of their Country, and that posterity would be no less careful to preserve what was composed in memory of the one, than they had been to continue the memory of the other: And there is no Hymn we can find so suitable to that occasion as this.*

1. PRaise ye *the* LORD: *for* it is *good to sing praises unto our* GOD; *for* it is *pleasant,* and *praise is comely.*] Let all the Nations praise the LORD; who will send us new benefits when we are truly thankful to him, our great Benefactor, for the old: for it is a thing highly acceptable to him, as well as delightful to those who are employed therein; and best becomes us of all other things, there being nothing so decent as to see men grateful to him that hath obliged them.

Ver. 2. *The* LORD, *doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.*] To which we stand bound above all other Men; for the LORD hath not only delivered us out of a sad Captivity; but in spite of all the opposition our enemies have made to it, (*Ezra*, IV. 12.) hath raised *Jerusalem* out of its ruins; whereby he invites the rest of our Brethren, who remained behind, to return to their own Country from whence they are expelled.

Ver. 3. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.*] He comforts us after our long sorrows, which had in a manner broken our heart with grief and sadness, and hath in some measure repaired our breaches, which like a festering wound, indangered the life of our Nation.

Ver. 4. *He telleth the number of the stars: he calleth them all by* their *names.*] Whom he knows how to gather, out of all their dispersions; and to find every one of them wheresoever they are, though as numerous as the stars of heaven: (*Gen.* XV. 5.) which he as distinctly and exactly understands (how confusedly soever they seem to us, to be scattered in the skie) as we do those things which we call by their proper names.

Ver. 5. *Great* is *our* LORD, *and of great power: his understanding* is *infinite.*] Let us not despair of it; for nothing is impossible with our LORD and Governor: who is not like earthly Kings, that rule over a few petty Provinces; but the great Sovereign of the whole world; whose power and wisdom are so unlimited, that he is able to do whatsoever he pleases, and knows how to compass whatsoever he designs.

Ver. 6. *The* LORD *lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.*] And doth not, because he is so great, despise the afflicted: But, if they meekly commit themselves to his care, will raise them up to a better condition; and throw down the mightiest Princes that proudly oppress them, as low as the very ground.

Ver. 7. *Sing unto the* LORD *with thanksgiving: sing praise upon the harp unto our* GOD.] Celebrate therefore with your thankful Songs (you cannot make a less return unto him) this infinite Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness: Begin now, with the usual Instruments of Musick, to sing Hymns of praise unto our GOD, for all his benefits.

Ver. 8. *Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.*] Particularly for the great plenty he hath given us by his almighty Goodness; (*Haggai* II. 1.) which shews it self, first in raising vapours from the Earth; and then turning them into clouds, wherewith he covers the face of heaven; and then bringing forth rain out of those clouds: which he sends back to the Earth again; and makes not only the green pastures, but the parched mountains and desart places become fruitful.

Ver. 9. *He giveth to the beast his food,* and *to the young ravens which cry.*] By which wonderful Providence he provides food even for the wild goats, and such like beasts; that live upon the top of craggy rocks: For he neglects not the vilest creatures, but satisfies the hunger of the young ravens; though it be so ravenous, that they are continually crying for new supplies.

Ver. 10. *He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of man.*] Let us not doubt then, but he that takes care of crows, will much more take care of us; and not be afraid, though we are of little force (*Nehem.* IV. 3, 4. VII. 4.) and have no armies of horse and foot to defend us: For the LORD (who fights for us, *Nehem.* IV. 20.) hath no need of these; and will not take part with our Enemies, because they are superiour to us in the strength of their horses, and the nimbleness of their soldiers.

Ver. 11. *The* LORD *taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.*] But delights to give those his assistance and protection, who worshipping him devoutly, fear to offend him: and having no help in themselves, nor any earthly refuge to fly unto, depend notwithstanding with a stedfast faith on his infinite mercy.

Ver. 12. *Praise the* LORD, *O Jerusalem: praise thy* GOD, *O Sion.*] Praise the LORD, O ye Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*; sing joyful Hymns unto your GOD, O ye people of *Sion*, (*Nehem.* XII. 27, 31, 40, 43.) who have seen this truth abundantly demonstrated in your days.

Ver. 13. *For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates: he hath blessed thy children within thee.*] For he hath made this City, which was lately without Walls and Gates, so strong a place that no Enemy dare assault it, (*Nehem.*

VI.

VI. 15, 16.) and hath encreased the number of thy Citizens, which were but few, (*Nehem.* VII. 4. XI. 1, 2.) by the manifold Blessings he hath poured on them.

Ver. 14. *He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.*] Which are not confined within the walls of that City, but he hath settled all the Country in peace: no enemy appearing to infest thy borders, and to disturb the husbandmen in their labours; which have produced so rich a crop, that plentiful provision is made for all our satisfaction.

Ver. 15. *He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly.*] This we ought to ascribe to his merciful Providence, who shews by the fruitful seasons he sends, after all things seem to be killed by a hard Winter, that he doth not intend by our affliction to destroy us; and that he can easily bring all our Brethren hither, who remain still in Captivity: For when he would have any alteration made in the earth, it is done as speedily as we can speak.

Ver. 16. *He giveth snow like wooll: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.*] He sends, for instance, a sudden cold: which sometimes turns the moist vapours, in the air, into flakes of snow, to cover the earth as with a fleece of wool, and defend the corn from the biting winds; and sometimes into hoary frost, which he gently scatters and strews, like ashes, upon the earth.

Ver. 17. *He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?*] And sometimes congeals them into ice; which he breaks into bits, and throws down in violent hail: accompanied with such extremity of cold, that neither Man nor Beast, nor the Fishes in the ponds and rivers, are able long to endure it.

Ver. 18. *He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.*] But then, to prevent the hurt that might ensue by its continuance, he issues forth another command, which as suddenly (Ver. 15.) makes a thaw; and, by the warm breath of softer winds, loosens the waters which were bound up, and causes them to flow again.

Ver. 19. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgements unto Israel.*] In such things as these the whole world see how powerful, and how good he is: But we have more peculiar reasons to depend upon him for a happy return of our Nation; whom he doth not teach meerly by the snow, the hoar-frost, and the ice; but by another sort of word than that which sends them upon the earth: (Ver. 15.) even by his *Ten Commandments* delivered from heaven (*Exod.* XX. 1.) in a most glorious and astonishing manner, (Ver. 18.) and by Laws of all sorts, which he hath given us for the government of our life.

Ver. 20. *He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the* LORD.] This is a privilege which no other Nation in the world enjoys, (*Deut.* IV. 32, 33.) For tho, they all receive the showers and snow out of the clouds, yet Laws from thence they have no acquaintance withal. Therefore let not us dishonour him so much, as to distrust his Providence: but continually praise the LORD, and acknowledge his bounty to us.

PSALM CXLVIII.

Hallelujah. *See* CXLVI.

ARGUMENT.

It doth not appear who was the Author of this Hymn, nor upon what occasion it was composed. But the last Verse sufficiently shews the Nation was then in a very flourishing condition; and therefore probably it was made by David, *when* GOD *had given him rest from all his Enemies: which filled his heart with such love to* GOD, *that it transported him into this rapture. Wherein, finding how short his own praises were, he wishes all Creatures in heaven and earth would conspire in a sweet Symphony, as* Theodoret *speaks, of singing Hymns unto him. And first he calls upon the world above, and all that is therein, from the* first *Verse to the* seventh: *where he descends to the world here below; and calls upon all things on the earth to praise the* LORD: *concluding (v. 13.) that as there is one maker of both, so all that they can say of Him, when they have joyned all their powers together in one Choire, falls infinitely short of his most excellent Majesty: Who hath set forth his most transcendent wisdom, power, and munificence, in such variety of stupendious work, that there is not the smallest of them, but ministers such matter of praise, nay admiration, to those that attentively consider them; that they cannot but wish with the Psalmist here, that every one of them were able to tell us, how much skill and kindness he hath shewn in their contrivance: or that we were able to find it out, and comprehend it. Thus he is to be understood when he calls upon all Creatures to praise the* LORD: *or it is as if he had said,* The LORD *is to be praised by or in all these things, as long as the world lasts.*

This I take to be the true account of this Psalm, which I refer to the times of David, *because the two following seem to have been then made; and there is no other we can so well fix upon: unless we will conceive that it was a meditation, when they were perfectly settled in a peaceable enjoyment of their Religion, after the Captivity; of which there is not the least intimation in this Psalm.*

1. PRAISE ye the LORD, *praise ye the* LORD *from the heavens: praise him in the heights.*] Let all Creatures praise the LORD. First let the Celestial Choire begin, and sing their thankful Hymns to him, who hath raised them so high above us in power and might, as well as in dignity and place.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 2. *Praiſe him, all his Angels: praiſe ye him all his hoſts.*] Praiſe him, all ye Angels, who have the honour to be the prime Miniſters of his excellent Majeſty: O let their ſeveral Hoſts and Companies, in whatſoever rank or order they ſtand, praiſe him whoſe Sovereign Authority commands them all.

Ver. 3. *Praiſe ye him ſun and moon: praiſe him all ye ſtars of light.*] Praiſe him ye Sun and Moon, who are his greateſt viſible miniſters, and unwearied in his ſervice: Praiſe him all the reſt of the ſhining Stars; and declare to all future generations, as ye have done for ſo many Ages paſt, how glorious he is.

Ver. 4. *Praiſe him ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.*] Let all the heavenly Regions praiſe him: particularly the Clouds, which hang in the Air, and diſtill in fruitful ſhowers to inrich the Earth.

Ver. 5. *Let them praiſe the Name of the* LORD: *for he commanded, and they were created.*] Let all theſe ſet forth the adorable wiſdom, and power, and goodneſs of the LORD: For by his omnipotent word, theſe, whom the miſtaken world calls Gods, were created; not to be worſhipped, but perpetually to proclaim his praiſe.

Ver. 6. *He hath alſo eſtabliſhed them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which ſhall not paſs.*] Who hath made them not only illuſtrious but everlaſting monuments of his ſplendour and glory: having fixt and ſettled them in an admirable order, which they conſtantly obſerve; and preſcribed them Laws which they never tranſgreſs.

Ver. 7. *Praiſe the* LORD *from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps.*] O let all Creatures here below accompany thoſe celeſtial hoſts, in their praiſes of the LORD: whoſe power the vaſt whales in their ſeveral kinds, and all that move in the profound depth of the Sea, abundantly declare.

Ver. 8. *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, ſtormy wind fulfilling his word.*] Let the Lightnings, Thunder, and Hail; the Snow, hoary Froſt, and Ice; the Winds, Storms, and Tempeſts; all make a part of this Song: for they conſtantly execute his Sovereign Will, and ſerve his wiſe Deſigns.

Ver 9. *Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars.*] The lofty Mountains alſo and the leſſer Hills; the Fruit-bearing Trees, with the ſtately Cedars; the Pines, the Firrs, and all the reſt (which he hath created for ſeveral ends and uſes) let them all be called upon to tell how great and how bountiful he is.

Ver. 10. *Beaſts and all cattle, creeping things, and flying fowl.*] The wild Beaſts alſo of the Foreſt, and all the Cattle that feed in the Fields; whatſoever creeps upon the Earth, or ſwims in the Sea, or flies in the Air; let it join in this Hymn of praiſe to him: who hath ſhewn his manifold wiſdom, and diffuſive Goodneſs in them all.

Ver. 11. *Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth.*] But eſpecially let Mankind praiſe him; (who after he had made theſe things) brought them into the world, laſt of all, to contemplate his wonderful works: And firſt let Kings (who here on Earth reſemble the Angels or the Sun in Heaven) and then let their Miniſters of State, and Lieutenants in their ſeveral Provinces; and next, all the Judges of the Earth (who are like the Moon and the Stars) give a good example unto all the Subjects; and ſtir them up, to meditate his praiſe.

Ver. 12. *Both young men and maidens, old men and children.*] Let no Sex, no Age think themſelves exempted from this heavenly employment: But let the Young men praiſe him for their ſtrength, and the Virgins for their beauty; they that are going out of the world, for all that they have ſeen and heard of him: and they that are newly come into it, for all the goodly Spectacles that are before them.

Ver. 13. *Let them praiſe the Name of the* LORD: *for his Name alone is excellent, and his glory* is above *the earth and heaven.*] Let them praiſe the incomparable Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Power of the LORD: For how great ſoever any other Beings are, there is no other GOD but he; whoſe moſt excellent Majeſty, infinitely ſurpaſſes all that the Earth or the Heavens can tell us of him.

Ver. 14. *He alſo exalteth the horn of his people, the praiſe of all his ſaints, even of the children of Iſrael, a people near unto him. Praiſe ye the* LORD.] And yet ſo great is his condeſcenſion unto us (who are bound therefore more particularly to praiſe him) he takes a peculiar care of us; and hath ſet over us a powerful Prince for the defence and ſafety of his People, (*Pſal.* LXXXIX. 19.) Whoſe fame he hath thereby raiſed to the higheſt pitch of honour; having obliged the Children of *Iſrael* by many peculiar benefits, eſpecially this; that they are a people more nearly related to him, than any other whatſoever: for he dwells among them in his holy place, where they approach to him. O praiſe him there for this ſingular favour.

PSALM CXLIX.

Hallelujah. *See* CXLVI.

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret *thinks this Pſalm was made for them, that after their return from Captivity, had many oppoſers; but by the Divine Aſſiſtance overcame them: And that it is a prediction of thoſe great things, which were done by the* Maccabees. *Certain it is, that ſome ſignal Victory was the occaſion of it; and thence Saint* Chryſoſtom *hath here given us a full account, I think, of the meaning of* A new Song: *which, according to the uſe of the word* new *in other places, (when they would expreſs a thing very wonderful, ſuch as hath not been ſeen nor heard of before,* Numb. *XVI.* 30. Jer. *XXXI.* 22.) *he takes to denote* An illuſtrious and famous Hymn, made for Victories, for great Atchievements and Tro-

phies. *Which were never more remarkable in this Nation, than in the days of* David; *and therefore this Pſalm may very well relate to his reign; who ſubdued ſeveral Kingdoms, which had ſtood out, and would not ſubmit to* Iſrael *till his time, though* God *had promiſed to give their Countries to them,* Gen. *XV.* 18. Exod. *XXIII.* 31. 2 Sam. *VIII.* 1, 2, &c. *X.* 19.

The interpretation which I have given of the ſixth *Verſe, need not ſeem ſtrange to any one; who conſiders that it hath been, and is the cuſtom of all Nations, to ſtir up themſelves to fight by the ſound of ſome muſical inſtrument or other.* "*The ancient Inhabitants of* Etruria, "*ſaith* Clemens Alexandrinus *(in the* ſecond "*Book of his* Pædagogus, *chap.* 4.) *uſed the* "*Trumpet for this purpoſe; the* Arcadians "*the Whiſtle; the* Sicilians *an Inſtrument* "*called* Pectids; *the* Cretians *the Harp;* "*the* Lacedæmonians *the Pipe; the* Thra-"cians *the Cornet; the* Egyptians *the Drum;* "*the* Arabians *the Cymbal: But it was pro-per to the* Iſraelites *to go forth againſt their Enemies, ſinging Pſalms of Praiſe to* God, *(as we read,* 2 Chron. *XX.* 21, 22.) *who had given great Victories to their Anceſtors, and had promiſed never to forſake their Poſterity; while they ſerved him only, and piouſly con-fided in him.*

1. PRaiſe *ye the* Lord. *Sing unto the* Lord *a new ſong, and his praiſe in the congregation of ſaints.*] Sing a new Hymn unto the Lord, for the freſh and ſingular benefits he hath beſtowed upon us: Let him be praiſed not only in private, but in the publick Aſ-ſemblies of thoſe who have received ſpecial marks of his favour to them.

Ver. 2. *Let Iſrael rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.*] Let all the *Iſraelites* rejoice in him that made them his peculiar people; and hath now raiſed them to great ſplendour among the Nations of the World: let the inhabitants of *Sion*, more particularly, be exceeding glad, that the Lord, who is our King, hath there ſettled his royal Throne, 2 *Sam.* V. 9. VI. 12.

Ver. 3. *Let them praiſe his name in the dance: let them ſing praiſes unto him with the timbrel and harp.*] Let them leap for joy, and unanimouſly praiſe his moſt excellent Ma-jeſty, in their Dances to the Flute: (2 *Sam.* VI. 16.) let them teſtifie their gratitude to him, by ſinging Pſalms, with the Timbrel and the Harp.

Ver. 4. *For the* Lord *taketh pleaſure in his people: he will beautifie the meek with ſal-vation.*] For the Lord taketh pleaſure in doing good unto his people: and will not only deliver them after they have been oppreſ-ſed many years; but, if they meekly depend upon him, make them as great and illuſtrious, as they have been contemptible and mean, 1 *Chron.* XIV. 2.

Ver. 5. *Let the ſaints be joyful in glory: let them ſing aloud upon their beds.*] Which ſhall fill the hearts of good men (who are dear to him) with the higheſt triumph, in the honour that he hath done them: and make them ſhout for joy, in the ſecurity and peace he ſhall beſtow upon them.

Ver. 6. Let *the high* praiſes *of* God *be in their mouth, and a two-edged ſword in their hand;*] Which they ſhall not doubt to main-tain againſt all oppoſers; for in aſſured hope of victory they ſhall go to war, with Pſalms and Hymns in their mouths, concerning the great acts of the Lord: which they ſhall courageouſly ſing with a loud voice, when they ſhall fall upon their enemies; and prefer to the two-edged ſword which they carry in their hand.

Ver. 7. *To execute vengeance upon the hea-then,* and *puniſhments upon the people;*] Where-with they ſhall take a juſt revenge upon the Heathen, for all the injuries they have done us: and ſo chaſtiſe the inſolence of the peo-ple, that they ſhall fear again to moleſt us, 1 *Chron.* XIV. 17.

Ver. 8. *To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;*] For their Victories ſhall be ſo compleat, that they ſhall not only rout their enemies and put them to flight, but lead away their Kings captive in chains; and take their great Captains and Com-manders priſoners, and keep them faſt in fetters of iron.

Ver. 9. *To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his ſaints. Praiſe ye the* Lord.] In order to the executing upon them the judgment which God hath long ago decreed, and is recorded in his Law, *Deut.* VII. 24. XXXII. 41, 42, 43. This is the honour which all *Iſrael* ſhall have, when they are in favour with God; and ſuch ſhall be their glorious Victories, and ſuch Hymns and melodious Songs ſhall they ſing, ſaying; *Hallelujah*, praiſe the Lord, by whoſe power and might we have done all this.

PSALM CL.

Hallelujah. *See* CXLVI.

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret *takes this alſo to be* Ἴαμος Ἐπινίκιος, *a Song of Triumph after ſome Victory: and the mention of the* mighty acts of the Lord, *Ver.* 2. *ſeems to countenance this conjecture: which conſiſts well enough with what others conceive; that it was at firſt particularly directed to the* Levites, *(by* David *I ſuppoſe) whoſe office it was to praiſe the* Lord *with muſical Inſtruments, (*1 Chron. *XVI.* 4, 5.) *and excite others to his praiſes not only for Victory; but for all other his benefits. For if the Tradition of the* Jews *be true, which we read at large in* Maimonides, *(in a Treatiſe on that ſubject) when the people of any place brought up their firſt fruits to preſent them to the* Lord *at* Jeruſalem, *(according to the Law,* Deut. *XXVI.) with a pipe going before them; as ſoon as they came to the mountain of the Temple, every one took his baſket into his hand, and ſung this whole Pſalm: till*

they

they came to the courts of the LORD'S *houſe; where the* Levites *met them ſinging the* XXX. Pſalm.

And indeed it might well be uſed upon occaſion of any exceeding great joy; for it ſeems to be intended (by the repetition of theſe words, praiſe the LORD, *or* praiſe him, *thirteen times; and by the calling for no leſs than ten Inſtruments of Muſick) to expreſs the height and fulneſs of their joy, and thankfulneſs to* GOD *for his benefits: nor can Muſick be ſo well imployed to any other uſe, as this Divine and Heavenly exerciſe of praiſing* GOD, *by Hymns, and Pſalms, and ſpiritual Songs: to which the Pſalmiſt ſeems to me to invite all Creatures, in Heaven and in Earth; from the higheſt to the loweſt. And with this the Collector of theſe* five Books *of Pſalms, thought good to conclude the whole; and not unfitly: For in whatſoever condition we be (as there are Pſalms adapted to* [illegible] *we ſhould never forget to* [illegible] *after we have prayed, or complained,* &c. *ſtill end with thankful acknowledgments to* GOD *for his goodneſs to us.*

Here are ſeveral ſorts of muſical Inſtruments mentioned; which I have not adventured to explain: becauſe the Hebrews *themſelves acknowledge they do not underſtand them. We have no way (ſaith* Aben Ezra *upon theſe words,* Ver. 5. *which we tranſlate* loud Cymbals) *to know what theſe muſical inſtruments were: there being many found in the Country of the* Iſmaelites *(i. e.* Mahometans) *which are not among the men of* Edom *(i. e.* Chriſtians) *and others among them, which the wiſe men of* Iſhmael *never heard of.*

1. PRaiſe ye the LORD. *Praiſe* GOD *in his ſanctuary: praiſe him in the firmament of his power.*] Praiſe the mighty GOD, ye Angelical Miniſters that attend upon him in his celeſtial Sanctuary: Praiſe him all ye inhabitants of Heaven, where you ſee the brightneſt demonſtrations (and moſt laſting monuments) of his power.

Ver. 2. *Praiſe him for his mighty acts: praiſe him according to his excellent greatneſs.*] Praiſe him all ye Miniſters of his upon earth; for the miraculous things which he hath done for our deliverance and ſalvation: let your praiſes bear ſome proportion to the excellence of his Majeſty, and the multitude of thoſe great and magnificent acts of mercy towards us.

Ver. 3. *Praiſe him with the ſound of the trumpet: praiſe him with the pſaltery and harp.*] Let the Prieſts of the LORD (*Numb.* X. 8.) praiſe him with the ſound of the Trumpet: and let the Levites (1 *Chron.* XXV. 6.) praiſe him with Pſalteries and Harps.

Ver. 4. *Praiſe him with the timbrel and dance: praiſe him with ſtringed inſtruments and organs.*] Let ſome praiſe him with the Timbrel and the Flute; and others praiſe him with the ſtringed Inſtruments and Organs.

Ver. 5. *Praiſe him upon the loud cymbals: praiſe him upon the high ſounding cymbals.*] Let all ſorts of Cymbals accompany their Pſalms and Hymns in his praiſe: both thoſe of daily uſe, and thoſe that are wont to be employed in times of the higheſt joy and triumph.

Ver. 6. *Let every thing that hath breath, praiſe the* LORD. *Praiſe ye the* LORD.] Finally, Let every man living join himſelf to this ſacred Choire; and at every breath praiſe the LORD, the giver of life and of all good things. To him let all the world, with one conſent, give perpetual praiſe.

THE *End of the* PSALMS.



A

PARAPHRASE
On the PROVERBS.

TO HER GRACE.
The Dutcheſs of *MONMOUTH.*

MADAM,

THERE were anciently ſo many Noble Women, as well as Men, who, even then made the ſtudy of the Scripture their delight, when Chriſtian Piety began to decay; that a great part of St. *Hierom*'s pains was beſtowed in opening the meaning of them to *Bleſilla*, *Marcella*, *Melania*, *Paula*, and her Daughter *Euſtochium*, with ſeveral other eminent Roman Ladies: *whoſe Songs* (as he writes to *Aſella*) *were nothing but Pſalms*; *whoſe Diſcourſe was the Goſpel*; *whoſe Pleaſure was continence*; *and whoſe Life was faſting and abſtinence.*

More particularly he addreſſed his ſervices of this kind, to the laſt of thoſe Ladies, *Euſtochium*; to whom he gives an Epithet, importing her prodigious induſtry, with the moſt fervent deſire, in the ſtudy of heavenly knowledge: and therefore inſcribed to her the moſt elaborate of all his Commentaries upon the Prophet *Iſaiah* (as he did afterward thoſe upon *Ezekiel*) which were ſent her by parts in *XVIII.* Books; before every one of which there is a ſolemn Preface to her.

By whoſe example, and to heighten that eſteem and love of Divine Wiſdom, wherewith, in an age of folly and vanity, GOD hath already inſpired your excellent mind, I have preſumed to dedicate to your GRACE this ſmall Work of mine; wherein with no ſmall labour, I have expounded the moſt uſeful Book of the *PROVERBS.*

Which commends it ſelf to your Grace's acceptance, both by the *excellence of the matter*; containing (as the words are *VIII.* 6. *XXII.* 20.) moſt noble and princely things; choice Maxims, built upon the oldeſt Obſervations, and that will ſtand firm and be found true, as long as the world endures: and from the *dignity and ſplendour of the Author*; whoſe illuſtrious name and pedigree, is ſet down on purpoſe (as St. *Baſil* thinks) in the entrance of the Book, to give the greater Authority to his Words.

It is *SOLOMON*, to whom the LORD himſelf ſaid, 1 *Kings* III. 12. *Behold, I have given thee a wiſe, and an underſtanding heart, ſo that there was none like thee before*

fore thee, neither after thee ſhall any ariſe like unto thee: And again, it is recorded of him there, *IV.* 29. *That* GOD *gave Solomon wiſdom and underſtanding exceeding much, and largeneſs of heart, even as the ſand that is on the ſea ſhore.* For as the Sand of the Sea incompaſſes all the Coaſts of this World where we inhabit; ſo did his Mind comprehend all things, as well Humane as Divine.

This is that admirable Perſon, to the ſtudy of whoſe rare Wiſdom I invite your *Grace*: which, that it may be had in greater Veneration, the Name alſo of his Mighty Anceſtor, ſaith the ſame St. *Baſil*, is added in the Title unto his own: to put us in mind, that he was the wiſe Son of a wiſe Father and Prophet, who from his infancy had inſtructed him in the Holy Writings, and made him fit to ſucceed him in his Throne.

That likewiſe contributes not a little to the weight of theſe Inſtructions, that the Author of them was a KING; and a *King* in the holy City of GOD, whoſe Authority he had; which being a name of regular and legal Power (as the ſame *Father* ſtill obſerves) it is manifeſt that the Precepts delivered by ſuch a Perſon, and one who was truly worthy of that high Title of a *King*, are of the greateſt worth and moment: becauſe they have reſpect to nothing but merely the common benefit, and publick good; and cannot be ſuſpected to have been framed and compoſed with any aim at private intereſt. For that is the difference, ſaith he, between a *Tyrant* and a *King*: that the former hath regard only to himſelf in all that he doth and deſigns; but the other conſults the profit and welfare of thoſe whom he governs.

So that, in ſhort, this is the Work of him, who was truly inveſted with that threefold glory, which the Ancients aſcribe to *Triſmegiſtus*; *the power of a King, the illumination of a Prieſt, and the learning of a Philoſopher.*

But the excellence of this Book will be beſt underſtood by the ſerious peruſal of it; which will diſcover it to be a Magazine of all ſorts of Wiſdom: *ſo full of golden Sentences* (as King *James* gives its character in his Inſtructions to his Son) *and moral Precepts, in all things that concern our converſation in this world, as among all the prophane Philoſophers and Poets, there is not to be found ſo rich a Store-houſe of Natural Wiſdom, agreeing with the Will and Divine Wiſdom of* GOD.

And therefore it is moſt worthy the conſtant ſtudy of all perſons, who would accompliſh themſelves with the moſt uſeful knowledge: but of none more, than of thoſe that are Great, whom *Solomon* inſtructs how to be Greater, and to make their Greatneſs alſo laſting and durable: and eſpecially of ſuch whoſe Underſtandings are great and capacious, able to penetrate into the depths even of the Civil Precepts and Advertiſements contained in this Book; *ſpringing* (as our great Advancer of Learning ſpeaks) *out of the moſt profound ſecrets of Wiſdom, and flowing over into a large field of variety.*

In which I am confident your *Grace* will delight to walk: whoſe exquiſite judgment cannot but find the higheſt entertainment, in weighing the Wiſdom, as well as the Truth, and Uſefulneſs of theſe Parables: and whoſe Vertue and Prudence diſpoſes the hours of your life with ſuch order, as not to let you want time, both to ponder them your ſelf, and to inſtil them alſo into the Mind of your Children.

Whoſe future happineſs depends upon their being early ſeaſoned with ſuch Principles as theſe: which will be the moſt effectual Preſervatives againſt the infectious air wherein we breathe; and a Treaſure of ſuch ineſtimable price, as will keep their Minds from being corrupted, by all the briberies of Fortune (as we call it) or from being dejected at any croſs turn of it; which, in this world, muſt be ſometimes expected.

For ſuch is the inconſtancy of all humane things, ſuch is the frailty even of our own bodies, as your Grace hath been lately taught by a tedious Sickneſs (from which I moſt heartily congratulate your Grace's happy recovery) that we love not our ſelves, if we ſeek not after a better Good, which is firm and permanent: a Good that can withſtand Corruption, and defend it ſelf againſt the force of time, and all the accidents of this World.

In the proſecution of which ſupreme Good, I commend your Grace to the Bleſſing of the Almighty; who always favours the leaſt deſires of being good, and therefore will never deſert your ſincere indeavours of it: which are not unknown to him, while you prefer the Cloſet to the Theatre, and look more to the inſide of Vertue, than to its outward appearances.

But I forget my ſelf; and ſtand in need of a pardon for this long Addreſs: which I ſhall the more eaſily obtain, if your Grace pleaſe to believe nothing emboldned me to it, but the opinion I have that your Goodneſs is as unlimited as my deſires to approve my ſelf, what I ſtand bound by many obligations to be,

May it pleaſe your GRACE,

Your Grace's moſt humble,
and obedient Servant,

S. PATRICK

THE PREFACE.

I. NEXT to the Psalms of David, *which are an admirable Collection of Devotion, follow* the Proverbs of Solomon, *which contain most excellent Rules of Life. They are commonly called his* Ethicks; *correcting men's errors, and teaching them how to conduct themselves in all relations: but may as well be called his* Politicks *also, comprehending under that word, Rules for the Government of Families, Cities and Kingdoms, as well as of particular Persons. For, as St.* Basil *speaks, this Book is,* Ὅλου ἀνθρώπου βίου, *an universal instruction and direction for all men, and for the whole life: containing frequent documents of what is to be done on all occasions.*

II. *And there being two ways of teaching; one by brief Sentences, and* Aphorisms, *which are delivered also promiscuously, without any great care about the order of them; the other by* methodical Discourse, *according to the Rules of* Logick, *proceeding orderly from one thing to another, till all that belongs to the matter in hand, be reduced to one body, and make as it were an intire building:* Solomon *hath chosen the first way, which was the most ancient; as it would be very easie to shew, were there any necessity of it; and were not the great antiquity of this sententious way of speaking, apparent enough from that passage of* David's, 1 Sam. *XXIV.* 13. As saith the Proverb of the Ancients; wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: *which is much like that Greek Adage,* ἀπὸ πονηρῶν πονηρὰ δέ. For *it was very usual with Wise Men of old (as the Lord* Bacon *observes, in his* Eighth Book *of the* Advancement of Learning) *when their observation light upon any thing that might prove beneficial unto common life, to reduce it immediately and contract it, either into some* short Sentence *or* Parable; *or else into a* Fable. *As for* Fables, *they were only the Substitutes and Supplements of Examples; to serve instead of them, while they were wanting, and no longer: When the world abounded with* Histories, *they became unnecessary, because the shadows of things are useful only where the substance cannot be had; and because the aim is more exact, and more pleasant when the mark is alive. Then those* Fables *were to give place to the sententious way of Instruction, comprising wise observations in a few words; which could be illustrated and inforced by a multitude of examples.*

III. *And therefore in the* fabulous *times, we find those even among the* Poets, *who forsook* Fables, *and betook themselves to this more profitable way of Instruction: particularly* Phocylides *and* Theognis, *whom* Julian *the Apostate is bold not only to compare with* Solomon, *but to prefer before him. To whom St.* Cyril *of* Alexandria *very judiciously answers (Lib. 7. adv.* Jul.) *that as* Solomon's *Work is of far greater Antiquity, he being contemporary with* Homer *himself, and they living a long time after with* Solon *and* Thales, *in the reign of* Crœsus: *so it is infinitely more weighty than theirs; who said, indeed, some pretty spruce things, but so weak and shallow in comparison with the manly and deep sense of* Solomon's *Proverbs, that they were fit only for the use of Nurses to prattle to their Babes; or at the most for Pædagogues to teach little Boys. There is not, for instance, such a wise instruction to be found in all their Books, as the very first of all in* Solomon's, *which he lays as the ground of all wisdom, (but they, alas! did not think of) that* The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. *This, as St.* Basil *observes, is that* καθάρσιον ψυχῆς *(which their Philosophers so much talk'd of, but did not understand) the only thing that can purge the soul, and prepare it to be capable of Instruction: which it is as improper, says he, to give to a man of impure affections, as it is to pour a precious ointment into a sordid filthy Vessel.*

The like I might say of another most admirable Precept in his Book, to dispose the soul for wisdom, viz. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. *There is no such word in all their Writings; nor in* Isocrates *neither (whom that Apostate Prince vainly magnified likewise above* Solomon) *who may be praised for some profitable lessons he gave to youth, but must stoop, as St.* Cyril *speaks, to this great person; who as he wrote long before him, so far out-went him in all sort of wisdom, for the instruction both of young and old. Nor doth he only give precepts of manners, but many excellent admonitions about rewards and punishments: together with lively descriptions of the events of humane actions; which serve much for our information. Many things also he discovers of mens most secret affections; of the causes and grounds of the greatest changes in humane affairs; of the principal things, that are of greatest moment in Government; of the way to avoid all manner of dangers, and to preserve our selves, our fame, our estates: with so many other things of like nature, that the Son of* Syrack *justly said of him,* Ecclus. *XLVII.* 14, 15. He was as a flood filled with understanding. His Soul covered the whole earth, and he filled it with dark Parables.

IV. *By that name some call these* short Sentences, *which we call* Proverbs: *though the word* Parable *properly signifies only a comparison or similitude. The original of which name is this (as* Grotius *hath observed in his* Prolegomena *to* Stobæus) *that the most antient Authors delivered their precepts about manners, or about government, by* comparisons: *either full and at length (which the Rhetoricians properly call* παραβολὴν, Parable) *or curtail'd, as we speak, and shortned. And these*

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taken either from things plainly fabulous (as that of the Fruit-trees *and the* Bramble, *in* Judges *IX. and that of the* Thiſtle *and the* Cedar, 2 Chron. *XXV.* 18. *of the* Hawk *and* Nightingale *in* Heſiod; *the* Wolfs, Dogs *and* Sheep *in* Demoſthenes; *and the famous parable of* Menenius *about the Members of our Body) or elſe from things likely and probable, as that of* Nathan *to* David, *and moſt of our bleſſed* Saviour's.

V. *But* Solomon's *Sentences in this Book are not of this Nature; and therefore the LXX. uſe another word, ſignifying a ſaying as trite and common as the high-way; worn, as we ſay, threadbare (to uſe St.* Baſil's *phraſe) by every body's conſtant uſe. And ſo doth the* Latin *and our* Engliſh *word* Proverb, *denote ſome ancient common Saying, which every body hath in his mouth. But the word in the* Hebrew *denotes only* any acute and excellent Saying; which is as worthy to be known by all, and to be in every one's mouth, as common Proverbs are. *And thus it is uſed in the moſt ancient Book of Holy Scripture for an* eloquent Speech, *much exceeding thoſe that had been made before, in the beginning of the XXVII. and XXIX. of* Job. *And ſo the Doctors of the Church explain it.* A Proverb, *ſaith St.* Baſil, is a profitable Saying, delivered with a moderate concealment of the Sence, *&c. or a pithy Sentence in a few words, expreſſing much ſenſe.*

This is the firſt ſignification of the word: tho' in after-times, every Saying that was never ſo little out of the way of vulgar ſpeech, began by the Hebrews *to be called* Maſhal; *as may be ſeen in* Ezek. *XX.* 49. *And whether it was figurative, or ſimple and plain, if it did contain any profitable Inſtruction, it was called by the ſame Name; as we learn from the Sentences in this Book.*

VI. *Which conſiſts of a* Preface, *and of the* Book *it ſelf. The* Preface *is in the* nine *firſt Chapters; ſeven of which ſeem to be an Admonition what is to be done, and what to be avoided, to make a man capable of Wiſdom; which in the* eighth *and* ninth *Chapters ſets forth her own praiſes.*

Then begins, as you find in the front of the tenth *Chapter, the* Proverbs of Solomon: *which conſiſt of* three *Parts, or Books. The* firſt Part, *from the beginning of the tenth Chapter, to the ſeventeenth verſe of the XXIId. where a new form of ſpeech, any body may diſcern, begins (as I have there noted) and continues to the XXVth Chapter: which may be called the* ſecond Part. *And then from the XXVth to the XXXth (which is the* laſt Part) *follow ſuch Sentences as were collected afterwards out of his Writings, or the Writings of thoſe who had recorded them; by ſome perſons whom* Hezekiah *employed to ſearch the ancient Records. For we are told in* 1 King. *IV. that he ſpake in all* three thouſand Proverbs: *which* Joſephus *ſeems to think were ſo many Books that periſhed in the Captivity; but S.* Hierom *takes for ſo many Sentences contained in this Book; that is, ſome of them, for there are in all but* 800 *verſes. And ſome of them are not* Solomon's; *for in the end of the Book are added certain Sayings of* Agur *to his Scholars, and the Inſtructions of a pious Mother to her Son* Lemuel: *of all which I have given an account in their proper places.*

VII. *And therefore muſt intreat all thoſe that would profit by this Book, to read the* Argument *of each Chapter, before they proceed to the* Paraphraſe: *or at leaſt to conſult the* References *which I have made to ſuch paſſages in it as will help to make the ſenſe clearer, or to explain difficult places; which ſometimes are capable of more ſenſes than one: and therefore if I have not repreſented them all in the* Paraphraſe, *I do it in the* Argument: *deſigning all alone this alone, to give the fulleſt and propereſt explication of every phraſe; upon which, as I have not dilated, ſo I have expreſſed the meaning in the plaineſt words I could find. For, as S.* Hierom *ſpeaks concerning his own Commentaries upon* Ezekiel *(in the Preface to the Vth Book)* my buſineſs was not to ſtudy the Art of Rhetorick, nor of exact compoſition and graceful language; but to uſe a careful diligence to hit the ſenſe: reſting content with this praiſe alone, if the Wiſe-man's words be underſtood by my means. *And indeed it ought to be the deſign of every good man, in ſuch Works as theſe, that the Holy Books (as he ſpeaks in another place)* may be made more intelligible by his endeavours; and not that his own Writings may be commended, by occaſion of thoſe Books.

VIII. *And in his time nothing was commended, he ſaith, but only that which men fanſied to be Eloquence. In this the* Latins *were then altogether delighted; but nauſeated the underſtanding of the Holy Scriptures. Which provoked* God, *in his juſt judgments, to deliver them into the hands of thoſe rough Nations, who in his days, broke in like a floud upon them; and turned their vain affectation of neatneſs and elegance of ſpeech, into rudeneſs and barbariſm; which ought to be a caution unto us, not to give up our ſelves to the admiration only of the language and of the wit of the Stage; leſt our minds thereby be ſo depraved, that we have no reliſh of the moſt ſerious, no not of the ſacred Writings, but reject them as inſipid things: with which diſeaſe if any be infected, they might by* God's *Grace, be cured; if they would be pleaſed to apply their mind with due attention to the ſtudy of this one Holy Book which wants nothing to entertain the minds of all men, though of the wideſt capacity, with the greateſt variety of pleaſure; if they have not perfectly loſt their taſte of that which will do them good, and make them truly happy.*

IX. *It is recorded by* Suetonius *of* Cæſar Auguſtus, *that in his reading all ſort of Greek, as well as Latin Authors, he chiefly obſerved, and tranſcribed ſuch wholeſome precepts or examples as might ſerve him either for publick or private uſe: which upon occaſion he produced, for the Inſtruction of his own domeſticks, or of the Commanders of his Armies, or the Governors of Provinces, or the Magiſtrates in his ſeveral Cities; according as he thought every one had need of Admonition: whom if any man have the heart to imitate,* Solomon *hath ſaved him the labour,*

which

which that great Person underwent. He need not turn over many Volumes, to search for all manner of wise Instructions; but be furnished here (and at an easie rate) out of the vast treasure of Learning he hath left us in this small Book, with the best Advices that can be given, either to Princes, Counsellors, Judges, and other publick Ministers; or to all sorts of Subjects in their several relations, and in every condition; to make them both pious and politick: to direct them in the choice of their Consorts, in the education of their Children; in the management of domestick affairs, and in their transactions with other men; in contracting or conducting their Friendships; in giving or taking good counsel and reproof; in making or preserving peace; in judging of men, and of the event of their designs; and in short (for it would be a new Book to mention every thing particularly) to instruct every one in all sorts of vertue; especially in the government of the Tongue; wherein men offend, and whereby they suffer so much, that there is no part of prudence more necessary than that, and therefore none more insisted on in this Book.

X. *Which contains the Wisdom of that excellent Prince, who could readily resolve all Questions and Doubts; penetrate into the nature of all things; and had his own Family and Kingdom, in such admirable order, that it astonished her who came from the ends of the earth, to discourse with him. And it was composed, if we may rely upon the judgment of the Jewish Writers, in his best and most judicious years; when his Kingdom also was in perfect peace, and there was no disturbance in his affairs.*

For the Book of Canticles, *say they, was wrote in his youth; the* Proverbs, *when he was of riper years; the* Ecclesiastes, *when he was old, and repented of the sins he had been drawn into by the snares of Women: who had made this admirable Person as great an example of folly as he had been before of wisdom: whence that common saying of theirs;* Men compose Songs, when they are young; Parables, when they are grown to be perfect Men; and Discourses of the Vanity of things, when they are old.

XI. *But the time of his writing these Books is not so material as the design; which is excellently expressed by S.* Basil, *in a Discourse of his upon the* Beginning of this Book, *(Tom. I. Hom. XII.)* "*The Book of* Proverbs, *saith he, is an Instruction of manners, and a Correction of the passions; and* "*an intire Direction of the whole life, containing abundance of precepts about well-doing. The* Eccle- "siastes *touches upon the Nature of things; and evidently shews the vanity of every thing in this* "*world: that so we may not think it worth our pains to be so sollicitous as we are about things* "*that swiftly pass away from us; nor waste the thoughts and cares of our mind about empty and* "*vanishing enjoyments. The* Song of Songs *shews the manner of perfecting Souls. For it contains* "*the happy concord of the Bridegroom and the Spouse: that is, the familiarity of the Soul with* "GOD *the* WORD."

XII. *I conclude this Preface, as that great Man doth that Discourse.* "*He is wise, not only* "*who hath arrived at a compleat habit of Wisdom, but who hath made some progress towards it;* "*nay, who doth as yet but love it, or desire it, and listen to it. Such as these, by the reading* "*of this Book, shall be made wiser; for they shall be instructed in much Divine, and in no less* "*Humane Learning: it expelling Vice divers ways; and with as great variety, introducing all* "*manner of Vertues. It bridles the injurious tongue; corrects the wanton eye; and ties the unjust* "*hands in chains. It persecutes sloth; chastises all absurd desires; teaches Prudence; raises mens* "*courage; and represents Temperance and Chastity after such a fashion, that one cannot but have* "*them in veneration.*"

Let a man but consent to one thing, which this Book desires, to make these Precepts familiar to his mind, saying unto wisdom *(as you find the words,* VII. 4.) thou art my sister, and calling understanding his kinswoman: *and he will not fail to be happy. For this is the sum of all, in a few words;*

Love her, and she shall preserve thee.

A PARA-

A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

PROVERBS.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The Title of this Book is joined to it, as a part of the work, and contained in the six first verses. Where the Author uses several words to express the matter he intends to treat of, viz. Wisdom, Instruction, Understanding, Knowledge, *&c. the difference of which I have expressed as well as I could in the Paraphrase, and shall not here criticize upon them. But observe rather that the learning they teach is the most necessary of all other; and therefore so contrived, as he tells us, that the most Ignorant as well as the most Wise may receive great benefit by it.*

In order to which, the first principle of it must be carefully observed; which is this: [a] *that a* due sense of GOD is a most necessary qualification to profit by these Instructions; *which will signifie nothing to* Epicures, *and such like profane persons. This is the very first word of the Book* v. 7. *teaching us, that our first care must be to possess our minds with a lively sense, that there is a* GOD; *and that the highest Wisdom in the World is to study to please Him, and to know what will please Him; and to be fearful to offend Him, by any neglect of Him, or by doing any thing contrary to his Will. Which* fear of offending GOD *is commonly founded in a dread of his punishments; which perhaps gives the first rise to this fear: however* Nazianzen *well observes (Orat. XXXIX. p.* 628.) *that we* must not, *if we would be wise,* first begin in Contemplation, and so end in Fear; (for an unbridled Contemplation is very dangerous) but being thoroughly seasoned and purged, and as one may say attenuated, and humbled by Fear, so to be carried aloft in Contemplation.

This is the first step to Wisdom, and the second is, [b] next to GOD, to bear a great reverence to Parents, *both natural and spiritual: to* GOD's *Ministers, that is, and to all Teachers and Instructors; to whom if Children be not bred to give a great regard, they seldom prove vertuous.* v. 8. *Where it is very observable how much Humane Laws differ from Divine: the former generally only providing that due regard be given by Children to their* Fathers, *but taking no notice of* Mothers; *as may be seen in the* Persian *Laws mentioned by* Aristotle, *the* Roman *described in the Digests and Constitutions, and several passages of the Greek Philosophers, which we find in* Epictetus *and* Simplicius, *who (as* Grotius *notes upon the* Fifth *Commandment) consult only the honour of the* Father: *but* GOD *in his Law takes care to preserve a just reverence both to* Father *and* Mother *equally; as the persons whose ministry He uses to bring us into the World. And accordingly not only* Solomon *in this place and many other, but the* Son *of* Sirach *also (who was bred under that Divine Institution) presses the duty owing to both very largely; in the first* sixteen *verses of the* III. *of* Ecclesiasticus.

Now one of the first things Parents should take care of, is to teach their Children [c] to avoid evil Company *(as it follows here* v. 10.) *and then to represent Vice in its true colours, as* Solomon *here doth one sort of wickedness,* v. 11, 12, &c. *the root of which he shews is* love of Money: *which therefore should be look'd upon as most odious; and indeed the root of all evil,* v. 18, 19.

Their stupid blindness also is to be represented, who will take no warning: but though destruction be plainly before their eyes in the way wherein they are; yet will go on to complete their ruin, v. 17.

And they are to be admonished also to hearken to the voice of Wisdom presently, wherefoever they meet with it: which is every where, v. 20, &c. *Which is pressed here* (v. 24, &c.) *from this consideration, that there will be a time when they shall stand in need of* GOD's *help; but not find it, if they have slighted his importunities to obedience. For he is not only good but just also: and not so easie, as to be moved merely by Prayers and Intreaties (and that when we are in distress) which have more of self-love in them, than love to him. Whose wise Providence requites men in their kind; and destroys them by that which they most desire.*

" *In short, in this* Chapter *he introduces Wis-*
" *dom speaking to his Son, or to her Children*
" *in general; inviting them to love her, and*
" *by no means to tread in the way of Sinners:*
" *but to keep close to her directions; threat-*
" *ning destruction to those who contemned this*
" *Counsel.*"

There ſeem to be three *Proverbial Sayings in it. One* v. 17. *which may be four or five ways interpreted: two of which I have compriſed in the Paraphraſe, being the moſt common and natural. Another* v. 31. *like to that in* Terence, Tute hoc intriviſti, omne hoc vorandum eſt tibi. *And the other in the next* v. 32. *Where thoſe words,* the proſperity of Fools ſhall deſtroy them, *teach us that it is a great part of Wiſdom, to be able to bear a great fortune, as we call it. Of which among the Jews* Jaſon *was an example in after-times, who was undone by his Succeſſes,* 2 Maccab. v. 6, 7, &c.

1. *THE proverbs of Solomon, the ſon of David, king of Iſrael* ;] This Book contains ſome notable and very uſeful Sayings of that wiſe Prince, King *Solomon*, the ſon of that devout Prince, King *David* ; by whoſe ſpecial appointment he ſucceeded him in the Government of GOD's peculiar People *Iſrael*, for which (according to *David*'s Prayer LXXII *Pſ.* and his own, 1 *Kings* III. 9.) GOD indued him with an extraordinary degree of underſtanding.

Ver. 2. *To know wiſdom and inſtruction, to perceive the words of underſtanding* ;] The ſcope of them, is to make a Man *know* what it is to be truly wiſe ; and *inſtruct* him how to avoid thoſe errors which Men are apt to fall into, or to correct them if he hath been miſled and run into them ; and to make him *underſtand* when good advice is given him, nay, to be able to give it unto others.

Ver. 3. *To receive the inſtruction of wiſdom, juſtice, and judgment, and equity* ;] For they will furniſh him with the moſt excellent notions, and make him capable to underſtand things of higheſt concernment : both how to be juſt and good in all *private tranſactions* ; and *in publick truſts and offices* to judge and act according to right and equity ; and every other way, to *be upright and exactly vertuous.*

Ver. 4. *To give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion.*] The moſt unskilful and incautious perſons may here learn to be *circumſpect and wary* ; and they who are childiſh and inconſiderate get ſo much knowledge, as to behave themſelves with *prudence and diſcretion.*

Ver. 5. *A wiſe* man *will hear, and will increaſe learning : and a man of underſtanding ſhall attain unto wiſe counſels.*] As for him that is wiſe already, he will not loſe his labour in reading this Book ; which will make him ſtill wiſer. And indeed it is principally deſigned for the improvement of him that is ſo wiſe, as *to be willing to learn more :* who ſhall both gain a *clearer knowledge* of what he underſtands, and alſo make ſuch additions, that he ſhall be fit to be a *counſellor to Kings, and govern the affairs of State* in the greateſt Kingdoms.

Ver. 6. *To underſtand a proverb, and the interpretation ; the words of the wiſe, and their dark ſayings.*] He ſhall comprehend the moſt *uſeful Maxims* ; and be able to expreſs them alſo with the *greateſt elegance :* the *weightieſt ſayings* of wiſe men ſhall be eaſie to him ; and their *abſtruſeſt notions* ſhall not be hidden from him.

Ver. 7. ¶ *The fear of the* LORD *is the beginning of knowledge :* but *fools deſpiſe wiſdom and inſtruction.*] ¶ In the firſt place then, let all, both ſimple and wiſe, look upon an awful ſenſe of GOD, a devout affection to him, and fear to offend him as the chiefeſt point, and the very foundation of all Wiſdom : without which men are but Fools ; and, having no regard to their Creator, will deſpiſe the wiſeſt Inſtructions that I can give them. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 8. *My ſon, hear the inſtruction of thy father, and forſake not the law of thy mother :*] And next to GOD let me adviſe thee, my Son (or whoever thou art that comeſt to learn of me in this Book) to reverence thy Parents. And not only to hearken unto thy *Father*, when he teaches thee to fear GOD, or tells thee that thou doſt amiſs ; but to let thy *Mother*'s commands be a Law to thee ; eſpecially when ſhe bids thee obſerve the Directions of thy Tutors and publick Inſtructors, unto whom ſhe commits thee : from which be ſure never to depart. *See* Arg. [*b.*]

Ver. 9. *For they* ſhall be *an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*] But value their counſels more than the faireſt ornaments thy Parents can put upon thy head ; or the moſt precious chains wherewith they can adorn thy neck : for they ſhall add a far greater grace unto thee ; and make thee more acceptable both with GOD, and with all worthy men.

Ver. 10. ¶ *My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not.*] ¶ There will be thoſe who will make it their buſineſs to ſeduce thee from their obedience ; but remember, my Son, that none can love thee ſo well as they : and therefore if leud Perſons (who have no reſpect to GOD, or to their pious Parents and Inſtructors,) perſwade thee to bear them company, by no means yield to their greateſt importunities ; but flee their ſociety. *See* Arg. [*c.*]

Ver. 11. *If they ſay, Come with us, let us lay wait for bloud, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe.*] They may repreſent perhaps what advantage it will be to thee, to join with them in the breach of the very next Commandment to that, of *honouring thy Father and thy Mother :* ſaying, come along with us to our lurking places, where no body can ſee us ; and from thence ſet upon a wealthy Traveller, who is to go that way, and take away his life : what though he be innocent, we ſhall the more eaſily diſpatch him, when he ſuſpects no danger, and hath given us no provocation.

Ver. 12. *Let us ſwallow them up alive, as the grave, and whole, as thoſe who go down into the pit :*] And tho' he ſhould have many Servants or Companions with him to defend him, let not that affright thee ; for we are enough of us to kill them all with eaſe in a moment, or to ſtrangle them, and bury them alive : ſo that none ſhall eſcape to tell any tales ; nor ſhall they make any noiſe ; nay, it ſhall not be known what is become of them.

Ver. 13. *We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil:*] The booty ſhall be great; for we are ſure to find vaſt treaſures, and all manner of precious things: enough to enrich us all, and furniſh our Houſes bravely; that we may live ſplendidly all our days.

Ver. 14. *Caſt in thy lot among us, let us all have one purſe:*] Come in for a ſhare of it; and thou ſhalt have as much of it as we, who have been longer at the trade: for we live like Friends, among whom all things are common; there is but one purſe among us all, in which every one hath an equal intereſt.

Ver. 15. *My ſon, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.*] But, my Son, (or whoever thou art that wilt learn of me) let them not prevail with thee, to go along with them; or to betake thy ſelf to ſuch a courſe of life: but if thou findeſt an inclination to it, ſtop it preſently; and ſtir not one ſtep in their company, or after their example.

Ver. 16. *For their feet run to evil, and make haſte to ſhed blood.*] For it is not one ſingle murther (or robbery) in which they will ingage thee (though the guilt of that is too horrid to venture upon) but they will be always hurrying thee to ſome new miſchief or other: and as ſoon as one miſchief is over, they will be ready for and make haſte to commit another.

Ver. 17. *Surely in vain the net is ſpread in the ſight of any bird.*] Flee from their ſociety therefore, now that I have given thee this warning: and be not ſo fooliſh and incautious as the ſilly Birds; who uſe to run into the ſnare or the net, which they ſee the Fowler lay before their eyes. (VII. 23.)

Ver. 18. *And they lay wait for their* own *blood, they lurk privily for their* own *lives.*] For as he doth not lay his net in vain, but they are caught therein; ſo aſſure thy ſelf theſe men are ſetting a trap for themſelves, when they lie in wait to take away the lives of others: for they ſhall not always eſcape the hand of Juſtice; but at laſt be taken and ſuffer, either by a ſpecial vengeance of GOD, or by his Miniſters, what they have deſerved.

Ver. 19. *So* are *the ways of every one that is greedy of gain:* which *taketh away the life of the owners thereof.*] Such is the fate of him that greedily endeavours to inrich himſelf by ſuch wicked means. As the Bird inticed by a little chaff, falls into a ſnare, which it doth not perceive; ſo he on a ſudden loſes his life, to ſatisfie a vain deſire of worldly pelf, which then he cannot enjoy.

Ver. 20. ¶ *Wiſdom crieth without, ſhe uttereth her voice in the ſtreets.*] ¶ Let me adviſe you therefore, rather to hearken to the manifold inſtructions of wiſdom; whoſe moſt excellent counſels you cannot but be as well acquainted withal, as you are with that which is proclaimed in the open ſtreets: For you hear them in the plain dictates of your own Conſciences, in the Laws of GOD, in the Mouth of his Prophets and Miniſters, in the Admonitions and Examples of good Men, and in the Courſe of his Providence and wiſe Government; which call upon you more earneſtly and loudly than theſe leud Seducers, to follow and obey them.

Ver. 21. *She crieth in the chief place of concourſe, in the opening of the gates: in the city ſhe uttereth her words,* ſaying,] There is no place where this Cry of Vertue and Piety is not heard; which is not aſhamed of it ſelf, nor lurks in darkneſs, like thoſe impious Seducers, but appears openly in the midſt of the greateſt crowds; where no noiſe can drown its voice, no buſineſs, either publick or private, can thruſt by its reproof; but ſtill it interpoſes it ſelf, and every body, even thoſe wicked Men that flee from it, hear it calling to them;

Ver. 22. *How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity? and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge?*] And repreſenting their unaccountable folly and ſtupidity, in ſuch unanſwerable Queſtions as theſe. Is it not apparent by many examples, that ſuch men as you are deceived and abuſed with vain hopes? Why then do you continue the cheat? Have you not play'd the fool long enough, but you will ſtill act againſt your reaſon and againſt your intereſt? Where lies the pleaſure of ſcoffing at Religion and Vertue, that you will never give it over? Is any man ſo wiſe, that he needs no Monitor? Or is Ignorance ſo laudable, that a man ſhould hate thoſe who would inform him?

Ver. 23. *Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my ſpirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*] Do not turn away from ſuch checks as theſe; but repent in time, and reſolve to learn your duty. It is not too late, for if you will liſten to the ſecret rebukes of your own Conſciences, and to the open reproofs of my Prophets, and follow their directions, I will plentifully communicate my mind, and infuſe the very ſenſe of it into you; It is not hard to find, nor will I conceal any thing of it, but plainly ſhew you all that I require of you.

Ver. 24. ¶ *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded;*] ¶ Which offer if you refuſe, nay, go on obſtinately to deſpiſe inſtruction, then hear the doom which GOD, whoſe voice Wiſdom is, paſſes upon you. Becauſe I have preſſed you often to amend, and ye would not yield to me; nay, I have been very urgent and earneſt with you (offering you my aſſiſtance, heaping upon you many benefits, and when they would do no good, laying on corrections, as well as ſhewing you the way to happineſs) and none of you would ſo much as attend unto me:

Ver. 25. *But ye have ſet at nought all my counſels, and would none of my reproof:*] But quite contrary, ſet at naught all the good advice I gave you, as if they had been but vain and idle words; and ſlighted all my reproofs and threatnings, as if they had been ridiculous, or of no moment.

Ver. 26.

Ver. 26. *I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh*;] Therefore I will repay you in your kind; and as little regard what becomes of you, in the day of your calamity (which like a dismal Cloud I will bring upon you unavoidably) I will be utterly unconcerned, when you know not which way to turn your selves; but are become the scorn of those who shall see you quake and tremble at that which before you would not fear at all.

Ver. 27. *When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.*] Tho' it prove such a dreadful calamity, as will lay all waste, it shall not move me to relieve you; but I will let it sweep you and all you have away like a whirlwind: and when you fall into the most pinching outward distresses, and into the sorest anguish of mind, you shall evidently see, it was my pleasure to reduce you to those inextricable straits and pressures.

Ver. 28. *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:*] For then (hearken all you that have not yet sinned to this degree of obstinacy) it will be very hard for these men not to think of me, whom before they would not regard: nay, they shall cry to me for help, but I will send them none; they shall seek my favour importunately, but without the least success.

Ver. 29. *For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the* LORD.] Because, when time was, they hated that knowledge, of which now they are forced to be desirous: and when they were earnestly sollicited to have some regard to GOD and to Religion, they would not consent unto it.

Ver. 30. *They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.*] But (as was said before) rejected my good Advice with such disdain, as if it had been a grievance to them; and slighted, nay, contemned all those Reproofs, whereby I would have reclaimed them from their Impiety.

Ver. 31. *Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.*] Therefore, as it is just that men should reap what they sow, and eat such Fruit as they plant, so these men shall suffer the punishments which their wicked doings naturally produce: nay, be glutted and surfeited with the miserable effects of their own counsels and contrivances.

Ver. 32. *For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*] For let them alone and they need no body but themselves to destroy them: their escaping dangers, only making them more audacious to run into them; and their receiving daily additions of riches and honours, supplying their folly with means to hasten their undoing.

Ver. 33. *But whoso hearkeneth unto me, shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.*] Such a vast difference there is between wicked and vertuous Men. For whoso follows my Counsels, and takes the courses to which I direct him, shall even then be safe, and possess what he hath in peace, when he sees these Fools come to ruin: Nay, he shall not be so much as disturbed with the fear of any mischief; but rest secure of a watchful Providence over him.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The attention of those that read this Book being bespoke in the foregoing Chapter, he perswades them not only to read but to receive and obey these good Counsels; by representing the benefits of being wise, that is, good and vertuous: and the mischiefs a man shall thereby avoid. The chief is, that he is sure to be under the guidance and blessing of GOD; *who will impart more and more of himself to those that study Wisdom; which is the scope of the former part of this Chapter: and as on the contrary, if he do not order his ways by the rules of Wisdom, he is sure to wander most dangerously; so if he keep close to them, they will preserve him from utter ruin; which is the design of the latter part of it. Where under the figure of an* Adulterous Woman, *v.* 16. *some think he perswades us to shun all those* [a] Doctrines *which draw away the mind from* GOD; *such as those of the* Epicureans *and* Idolaters. *But I take this to be intimated before* v. 12. *and therefore understand him literally: And then he seems to give a caution against the breach of the next Commandment to that mentioned in the first Chapter,* v. 10, 11. *where he charges his Son by no means to consent to join with* Murtherers; *and here to shun* Fornication and Adultery, *which alienate the mind quite from Wisdom,* v. 16, 17, &c.

This therefore is one of the first things Wisdom directs us unto, and a principal benefit we receive by it; to preserve our Understandings from being corrupted by keeping our Bodies pure and undefiled. *For too many, giving up themselves to sleshly Lusts, are thereby wholly perverted, and never recover themselves; but live and die like Fools.*

And one of the next points of Wisdom is, [b] *to be taught by the dear-bought experience of others; who have been ruined Body and Soul, by those lewd Courses to which we are inticed. And here the wise Man leads us back as far as the Old World; which was wholly destroyed by such villanies as mens brutish Lusts and Passions carry them to commit. This seems to be implied in the word* Rephaim, *v.* 18. *(concerning which see Mr.* Mede, *p.* 42.) *who being abominably debauched themselves, had corrupted the rest of the World: so that there was no way left to purge it, but by extirpating the whole race of Mankind, except the Family of* Noah.

In short, here are both Promises and Threatnings to excite us to the study of Wisdom; together with good Directions to make our Proceedings successful; which are principally these. First, our own diligence; *secondly,* dependance upon GOD for help and assistance; *thirdly,* a due value of that which we seek; *fourthly,*

avoiding

avoiding ſuch things as will plainly ſeduce us; *and laſtly*, putting in practice what we know, *that we may know more: for want of which many learned Men have proved worſe than the moſt ignorant. Moſt of theſe are the ſenſe of the beginning of the Chapter; and the laſt of them is the ſenſe of* v. 10, 11.

[c] *There are thoſe who look upon* v. 4. *as a* Proverbial Saying, *borrowed from thoſe that dig in Mines: the former part of it expreſſing eager deſire and great diligence; and the latter invincible reſolution and conſtant perſeverance, notwithſtanding thoſe difficulties that occur to diſcourage our labour. Both which I have taken notice of in the Paraphraſe; though I ſee nothing* Proverbial *in it, more than in many other ſimilitudes.*

[d] *I do not know whether I need obſerve (it is ſo eaſy) that the phraſe we meet withal* v. 19. go unto her, *is a modeſt expreſſion; uſed frequently in the holy Books: as may be ſeen very often in one Chapter XXXVIII.* Gen. 2, 8, 9, 16, 18.

1. MY *ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;*] And now, My Son, whoſe happineſs I moſt heartily deſire, let me tell thee for thy further incouragement; that if thou doſt entertain theſe Exhortations, which I have now given thee; and keep theſe Precepts in remembrance, for the ſame end that Corn is ſown and covered in the ground:

Ver. 2. *So that thou incline thine ear unto wiſdom, and apply thy heart to underſtanding:*] Liſtening with diligent attention, not to the inticements of ſuch evil Men as I have deſcribed, but to the counſels and inſtructions of Wiſdom; with ſincere affection applying thy mind to underſtand thy duty:

Ver. 3. *Yea, if thou crieſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding:*] And moreover, if thou expreſſeſt ſuch a deſire of it, as men do of that which they moſt need; and without which they are in danger to periſh: praying thoſe that are able to inform thee; and beſeeching GOD likewiſe with ardent devotion, that he would bring thee acquainted with it.

Ver. 4. *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her, as* for *hid treaſures:*] If thou doſt value this Wiſdom above the greateſt Treaſures, and ſhew thy eſteem of it by ſtudious ſeeking for it, as covetous men do for money: laying hold upon all occaſions of profiting in knowledge, and purſuing thy advantages (as they do) when thou meeteſt with them; not giving over thy labour preſently: if thou findeſt not what thou deſireſt; but enquiring ſtill, and ſparing no pains to know what the will of the LORD is: *See* Arg. [c.]

Ver. 5. *Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the* LORD; *and find the knowledge of* GOD.] Then thou ſhalt not fail to underſtand what it is to be truly religious; and that there is no Wiſdom comparable to it: and ſhalt find alſo what reaſon there is to reverence, worſhip and ſollicitouſly obey him, who is the Almighty Creator, Governour, and Judge of all the World.

Ver. 6. *For the* LORD *giveth wiſdom: out of his mouth* cometh *knowledge and underſtanding.*] For as Wiſdom, no leſs than all other good things is the gift of the LORD (without whom all our pains and ſtudy about it will be ineffectual) ſo there is no doubt he will beſtow it on thoſe who eſteem it above all worldly goods; eſpecially this moſt neceſſary part of it: which he hath already imparted to us by his Prophets and Men inſpired: who hath given us a true knowledge and underſtanding of him.

Ver. 7. *He layeth up ſound wiſdom for the righteous:* he is *a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*] And have aſſured us, that he hath ſolid and durable Bleſſings (tranſcending all the tranſitory things of this life) reſerved in ſtore for upright Men: and will protect all thoſe by his Almighty Providence, whoſe care it is to perform and complete obedience to him in all things.

Ver. 8. *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preſerveth the way of his ſaints.*] That ſo he may preſerve them in their integrity; and incourage them neither to ſwerve from the rules of Juſtice, nor to ceaſe to exerciſe Mercy and Kindneſs: For he hath a great favour to ſuch pious Perſons; and will be their keeper and defender in ſuch proceedings.

Ver. 9. *Then ſhalt thou underſtand righteouſneſs, and judgment, and equity*; yea, *every good path.*] By which thou ſhalt underſtand that Juſtice and Mercy in thy private dealings, and faithful diſcharge of thy truſt in all publick Offices, and uprightneſs in every other Vertue; are all of them the beſt, the moſt plain, eaſy, and natural way a man can take to be happy.

Ver. 10. ¶ *When wiſdom entreth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleaſant unto thy ſoul;*] ¶ And when Wiſdom hath thus taken poſſeſſion of thy very heart and affections; and thou findeſt an inward pleaſure and ſatisfaction, by obſerving the rules of Piety, and all manner of Vertue.

Ver. 11. *Diſcretion ſhall preſerve thee, underſtanding ſhall keep thee:*] This alone will be a ſufficient ſecurity to thee, and make thee unwilling to depart from them. For thy own experience will teach thee that it is the greateſt cunning to go in thoſe plain and open ways; and that no men underſtand their own intereſt ſo well, as they cannot be perſwaded by any means to forſake them.

Ver. 12. *To deliver thee from the way of the evil* man, *from the man that ſpeaketh froward things.*] Though otherwiſe thou mighteſt be ſeduced into a wrong courſe, yet this will deliver thee from that danger; and not ſuffer thee to be perverted by the mouth of him, that would ſubtilly inſinuate his leud Principles into thee.

Ver. 13. *Who leave the paths of uprightneſs, to walk in the ways of darkneſs:*] Though thou ſhouldeſt be aſſaulted by many of them, thou ſhalt eaſily diſcover their folly; in leaving the ſtraight, plain and even paths of Vertue, to walk blindly they know not whither in the perplexed ways of Vice and Wickedneſs.

Ver. 14. *Who rejoyce to do evil*, and *delight in the frowardneſs of the wicked.*] Being ſo mad as

to rejoyce when they have done any miſchief; and having no higher pleaſure than to pervert others, and make them as bad as themſelves:

Ver. 15. *Whoſe ways are crooked, and they forward in their paths.*] That is, to draw them aſide, and intangle them in intricate ways, directly croſs to their own intereſt, ſafety, and pleaſure; for the whole courſe of their life is nothing elſe but a ſhameful contradiction to their ſobereſt Reaſon and beſt Underſtanding.

Ver 16. *To deliver thee from the ſtrange woman, even from the ſtranger which flattereth with her words:*] But ſuch is that ſweet ſatisfaction which (as I ſaid *v.* 10, 11.) thou wilt find in the affectionate love of true Wiſdom, that it will deliver thee, not only from the ſnares of wicked Men; but, which is more dangerous, of a naughty Woman: whoſe company (though ſo pernicious that God would have thee perfectly eſtranged from her, if ſhe were not of the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, yet) hath powerful charms in it, to flatter thee into her embraces. *See* Argument [*a.*]

Ver. 17. *Which forſaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her* God.] Above all other, from that filthy Adultereſs, who is ſo leud as to leave her Husband (though a worthy and perhaps noble Perſon) to whom ſhe was joined in her youth, when love is in its greateſt warmth, and took him for her Guide and Governor: but hath wickedly broken the Laws of God, and violated the ſolemn vow of fidelity to him, which ſhe made when they were married.

Ver. 18. *For her houſe inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.*] The leaſt degree of that diſcretion which Wiſdom infuſes, will teach thee to avoid her Society, who loves no body, now that ſhe hath forſaken him that had her firſt affection; but ſeeks the ruin of all that go to her Houſe: where, by one means or other, they are in danger to meet with their Grave, and be ſent to keep company with thoſe old Giants, who corrupted Mankind with ſuch filthineſs and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the Earth. (VI. *Gen.* 4, 5, 11.) *See* Arg. [*b.*]

Ver. 19. *None that go unto her, return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.*] And this is very remarkable, that it is rarely ſeen that any body who is drawn into her impure embraces, ever gets out again: but ſhe holds them all ſo faſt by her inchantments, and they are ſo blinded and bewildred by her arts; that, like Men who have quite loſt their way in a ſtrange Country, they ſeldom or never can hit into it, and recover themſelves, to a virtuous way of living. *See* Argument [*d.*]

Ver. 20. *That thou mayſt walk in the way of good* men, *and keep the paths of the righteous.*] In which the ſincere love of Wiſdom, (*v.* 11, 12, &c.) will ſo ſecure thee; that eſcaping her ſnares, as well as thoſe of wicked Men, thou may'ſt imitate thoſe excellent Perſons the Patriarchs and Prophets; and be preſerved in the paths of thoſe righteous Men who have followed after them.

Ver. 21. *For the upright ſhall dwell in the land, and the perfect ſhall remain in it.*] Which is as much as to ſay, that thou may'ſt be perfectly happy: for men of integrity (according to God's promiſe, XI. *Deut.* 8, 9, 21.) ſhall peaceably enjoy this good Land which God hath given us; and they that ſtudy ſincerely to pleaſe him in all things, ſhall leave it in poſſeſſion to their Poſterity after them.

Ver. 22. *But the wicked ſhall be cut off from the earth, and the tranſgreſſors ſhall be rooted out of it.*] But ſuch impious Men, as I ſpoke of (according to what God himſelf hath alſo denounced XI. *Deut.* 17. and other places) ſhall be cut down from the Earth; where they may flouriſh, like a Tree, for a time: nay, they that give themſelves up to do wickedly, and keep no faith with God nor Man, ſhall be pluckt up, like a Tree, by the very roots, and leave none to preſerve their memory behind them.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter he continues to preſs obedience to the precepts of Wiſdom; from the conſideration of the Benefits that are to be reaped thereby. Which he began to ſpeak of in the foregoing Chapter (touching alſo there upon the miſchiefs on the contrary ſide) but here handles more largely; and explains it not only in general but in ſeveral particular Precepts: for inſtance, liberality to God's Miniſters, *v.* 9, 10. patience in adverſity, *v.* 11, 12. *the foundation of which is* an intire truſt in God, and his Fidelity, *who will honour thoſe that honour him, in his Miniſters; and never deſert thoſe in their trouble, who do good when they are in their proſperity,* v. 5, 6.

After theſe things he returns to the general Exhortation, v. 13, &c. *adviſing every one to learn the Doctrine delivered by God, and to be obedient; and not to be ſo fooliſh, as to preferr their own wiſdom or craft before it. To which he adds Promiſes, and Comminations; together with ſeveral Advices; which I need not note particularly, becauſe they lie plainly before their eyes who will read the Chapter.*

I ſhall only obſerve that he repreſents Wiſdom [a] (v. 16, 17, &c.) *that is, Religion and Vertue as other Authors have done (particularly* Cebes *in his* Tables) *in the ſhape of a beautiful Woman, or rather Queen; with her Arms extended, in the poſture not only of directing, but alſo of rewarding her Lovers and Followers. For ſhe holds forth in her* Right hand *the great bleſſings of Health, and length of days, unto all thoſe that will walk in the way to which ſhe points. And it was but juſt to place this in her* Right hand, *that is, to give it the precedence; becauſe it was the chief promiſe of the Law: and indeed the moſt deſireable of all earthly Bleſſings, without which nothing can be injoyed; no not our ſelves.*

And then, after this, follow Wealth and Reputation; things that Mankind mightily covet; which ſhe places in her Left hand; *as inferiour Bleſſings, but that come alſo from her gift.*

And

And as for chearfulneſs in all conditions, there are no Pleaſures he affirms like thoſe, which wait upon her, and attend her motions. Safe and ſecure Pleaſures; which do not merely gratify us for the preſent, and then expoſe us to danger and leave us ſad afterward: but give us a peaceable poſſeſſion of perpetual joy; which never dies nor decays; but, like the Tree of Life, *remains freſh for ever. This he proves,* v. 19, 20. *and amplifies in the reſt of the Chapter.*

[b] *In which ſome obſerve* three *Proverbial Sayings: One* v. 8. *which ſeems to be but a metaphorical repreſentation of that firmneſs, that vigorous health, and chearfulneſs of mind, which Vertue imparts: the other in* v. 12. [c] whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; *which* Theodoret *upon XII.* Heb. 6. *calls indeed* παραμυθικὸν παράδειγμα, *a* Proverbial Admonition, *belonging to ſuch Parents, Guardians and Maſters, as are careful of thoſe committed to their charge: but he names it ſo, I ſuppoſe, only becauſe he found it in the Book of the* Proverbs. *The* laſt *in* v. 18. [d] Tree of Life: *which ſeems to be a Proverbial Speech (uſed afterward more than once in this Book) for that which prolongs Life; and makes it very delightful and pleaſant, as well as firm and durable: If we underſtand it of* Chriſt, *the wiſdom of* God (*as* Origen, *St.* Ambroſe, *St.* Auſtin *and others do*) *or of his Doctrine, which is the ſame: it is literally true that he gives Immortality, as the Tree of Life in Paradiſe would have done.*

1. MY *ſon, forget not my Law; but let thine heart keep my commandments.*] Let me then again intreat thee, whoever thou art that comeſt to learn of me (who loveth thee with a Fatherly affection) not to be careleſs and negligent in the obſervance of theſe Inſtructions: but remember them, and love them, and ſet thy ſelf heartily to do whatſoever I command thee.

Ver. 2. *For length of days, and long life, and peace ſhall they add to thee.*] For this is the ſureſt way to that which all men naturally deſire, and ſeek to attain: a long life, in firm health, vigour, and ſtrength; with all manner of happineſs and proſperity, XXX. *Deut.* 18, 20.

Ver. 3. *Let not mercy and truth forſake thee: bind them about thy neck, write them upon the table of thine heart.*] Of this thou canſt not miſs, if thou wilt be ſtedfaſtly good and juſt; for the infinite bounty of God, and his faithfulneſs to his Promiſes will ſecure theſe Bleſſings to thee: therefore let my Commandments be ever before thine eyes; fix them in thy Memory, and in thy Affections, as if they were ingraven upon thy Heart; and look upon it as the greateſt ornament to be obedient to them.

Ver. 4. *So ſhalt thou find favour and good underſtanding in the ſight of* God *and man.*] Which is as much, as if I had bidden thee acquire favour with God; and underſtand, on all occaſions, what is good for thy ſelf, ordering all thy affairs with ſuch judgment and prudence, as to be in high eſteem with him and with Men.

Ver. 5. ¶ *Truſt in the* Lord *with all thine heart; and lean not unto thy own underſtanding.*] ¶ And aſſure thy ſelf there is no rule of prudence like to this, to confide in God entirely; and to depend wholly on his Providence, for good ſucceſs in well-doing: not imagining that by thy own wit and policy, thou canſt contrive ſuch events as thou deſireſt, and bring about what thou deſigneſt.

Ver. 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths.*] No, in all thy undertakings both private and publick, be ſenſible of his over-ruling Power; obſerve his Laws; and implore his favour and bleſſing: and he ſhall guide thee in thy proceedings; and bring them to an happy iſſue, as he in his Wiſdom ſees beſt for thee.

Ver. 7. ¶ *Be not wiſe in thine own eyes: fear the* Lord, *and depart from evil.*] ¶ Never be guilty of ſuch folly, as to conceit thine own wit to be ſo great, that thou canſt manage things thereby in thine own way (neglecting the Rules that he hath preſcribed thee) to thy ſatisfaction: but have a religious regard to him, who can either diſappoint or proſper thee, as he pleaſes; and, fearing to offend his Majeſty, avoid moſt cautiouſly thoſe practices that he hath forbidden thee.

Ver. 8. *It ſhall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*] This is the way to preſerve a good habit both of Soul and Body: and in all conditions to remain undejected; nay, cheerful and fully ſatisfied, whatſoever happens. *See* Arg. [b.]

Ver. 9. *Honour the* Lord *with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt-fruits of all thine increaſe.*] As for example, there are thoſe who think it prudence to ſave all they can; though it be by robbing God himſelf: But, if thou wilt be truly wiſe and happy, honour him in his Miniſters, by paying them their *tithes* duly; and bringing *oblations* to his houſe at the *three* ſolemn Feaſts; (XXIII. *Exod.* 14, 15.) together with the *firſt fruits* of all that thy Eſtate produces (XXII. *Exod.* 29, 30.) in token of thy gratitude to him, and that all thou haſt is his, and cannot thrive without his Bleſſing.

Ver. 10. *So ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new wine.*] Which he will pour upon thee abundantly; and convince thee, by lading the Earth with Fruit, and ſending a ſeaſonable as well as plentiful Harveſt and Vintage, that this is the way, not to diminiſh, but to encreaſe the Eſtate which God hath given thee. XXVIII. *Deut.* 4, 5. 2 *Chron.* XXXI. 10.

Ver. 11. ¶ *My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtning of the* Lord: *neither be weary of his correction.*] ¶ And ſuppoſe it be his pleaſure that any affliction ſhould befal thee; My Son, (*v.* 1.) let not that diſſatisfie thee; nor make thee either doubt of his gracious Providence over thee, or out of impatience take any unlawful courſe to remove it from thee.

Ver. 12. *For whom the* Lord *loveth he correcteth, even as a father the ſon, in whom he delighteth.*] But rather ſubmit unto it, as a

part

part of his Fatherly Diſcipline, which cannot hurt thee; but only correct ſomething that is amiſs in thee: For we are ſure he loves thoſe that keep his Commandments; and therefore nothing that proceeds from his love ought to be deſpiſed; or received with an abject mind; but duly eſteem'd by them, and raiſe their expectation of ſome good from the affliction; which ſhould no more make him ſuſpected of any unkindneſs, than a tender Parent is, when he whips the Child in whom he delights; and to whom he wiſhes ſo well, that he will not let him be unchaſtiſed. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 13. ¶ *Happy is the man that findeth wiſdom, and the man that getteth underſtanding.*] ¶ Happy, more happy than can be expreſſed, is that man, who attains to this degree of wiſdom; and acquires (though it coſt him the greateſt pains and labour) ſuch an underſtanding of GOD and belief of his Providence, as, notwithſtanding any troubles that befal him, ſtill to adhere unto him in faithful obedience, (*v.* 7.)

Ver. 14. *For the merchandiſe of it is better than the merchandiſe of ſilver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.*] If it were to be bought for money, one would purchaſe it at any rate: for the profit of it is infinitely to be preferred, before all the advantages that can be made by ſilver and gold.

Ver. 15. *She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared unto her.*] The moſt precious Pearls are not ſo valuable: nor can our boundleſs Fancy preſent any thing to our Wiſhes, that is worthy to come in competition with it.

Ver. 16. *Length of days is in her right hand:* and *in her left hand riches and honour.*] For true Wiſdom preſents us, as we ſay, with both hands: teaching us in the firſt place ſuch prudence and moderation, as by the Divine Bleſſing prolong our days (which none of thoſe things can do for us) and in the next place, adds both riches and honour; which men fooliſhly and vainly ſeek to get and to keep by other means. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 17. *Her ways* are *ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths* are *peace.*] And beſides all this, there is a ſingular pleaſure, nay the higheſt delight, in all the acts of Vertue to which Wiſdom directs her Followers: who are always, either in perfect ſafety by well-doing; or, if any trouble come upon them, have that inward tranquillity and ſatisfaction, which nothing elſe could give them.

Ver. 18. *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy* is every one *that retaineth her.*] In ſhort, Wiſdom leads into a Paradiſe; and ſupplies the place of that Tree of Life, from whence our firſt Parents were baniſhed: that is, gives not only a preſent, but an immortal ſatisfaction, to all thoſe that ſtrongly apprehend and retain her Precepts; and therefore I again pronounce him happy (*v.* 13.) above all other men, and above all expreſſion, who conſtantly and firmly adheres unto them. *See* Argument [*d*.]

Ver. 19. *The* LORD *by wiſdom hath founded the earth; by underſtanding hath he eſtabliſhed the heavens.*] For they are a participation of that wonderful Wiſdom and Underſtanding, whereby the LORD ſetled the Earth, in that place where it remains fixed; and diſpoſed the heavenly Bodies in that admirable and unchangeable order, which he would have us imitate.

Ver. 20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.*] In works of mercy and goodneſs eſpecially: whereby we plainly communicate with him in that knowledge, by which the LORD made fountains of water guſh out of the Earth for the uſe of all living Creatures; and the Clouds drop down plentifully their refreſhing dews, for the cheriſhing of Plants and Graſs, which in hot Countries many times have no other moiſture.

Ver. 21. ¶ *My ſon, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep ſound wiſdom and diſcretion.*] ¶ My Son (to whom my affection is ſo great that I cannot but again repeat it, *v.* 1, 11.) let me prevail with thee to fix theſe good inſtructions in thy mind: look upon them as the moſt ſolid Wiſdom, and the greateſt cunning and policy; and accordingly obſerve them.

Ver. 22. *So ſhall they be life unto thy ſoul, and grace to thy neck.*] For they will revive and chear thee, when other things fail thee: and inable thee alſo with acceptable words to comfort thoſe, whom the fame of thy Wiſdom ſhall invite to learn of thee.

Ver. 23. *Then ſhalt thou walk in thy way ſafely, and thy foot ſhall not ſtumble.*] When thou goeſt abroad about thy buſineſs thou ſhalt diſpatch it the more chearfully; becauſe thou art ſure of GOD's Providence over thee: and wiſdom will direct thee to avoid thoſe ſtumbling blocks, by which others fall into ſin and danger.

Ver. 24. *When thou lieſt down, thou ſhalt not be afraid: yea, thou ſhalt lie down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet.*] And when thou comeſt home to reſt from thy labours, thou ſhalt not be troubled with fear of what may happen, whilſt thou art aſleep; but (having nothing within to diſcompoſe thee) ſhalt lie down ſecurely, and, by a ſound and ſweet repoſe be refreſhed to return to thy employments.

Ver. 25. *Be not afraid of ſudden fear, neither of the deſolation of the wicked when it cometh.*] In which, if thou ſhouldſt be interrupted by any rumours and reports of unexpected and approaching danger, let not that diſturb thee: no, though thou ſhouldſt ſee the Wicked ready to lay all waſte, or the Divine Vengeance bringing utter deſolation upon them for their wickedneſs.

Ver. 26. *For the* LORD *ſhall be thy confidence, and ſhall keep thy foot from being taken.*] For a firm hope in the LORD ſhall be thy ſupport, even when thou art in a tottering condition: nay, when thy skill quite fails thee, and thou knoweſt not what to do for thy ſafety; he ſhall ſo direct and guide thee, that thou ſhalt be preſerved from falling into the hands of thoſe that lie in wait to deſtroy thee.

Ver. 27. ¶ *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand*

hand to do it.] ¶ And, as it will give thee great ſecurity of mind and confidence in God at ſuch a time, not to be conſcious to thy ſelf of any wrong done to thy Neighbour, by denying to pay thy juſt debts, when thou art able; ſo the remembrance of having done good to others will be a far greater: and therefore let me adviſe thee to take a ſpecial care, not to withhold relief from thoſe, whoſe needs intitle them unto it: when thou canſt not pretend diſability, but haſt wherewithal to do it.

Ver. 28. *Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou haſt it by thee.*] And as thou wouldeſt not have God to deferr his help in ſuch diſtreſſes as I ſpake of (*v.* 25, 26.) ſo do not thou put off thy Neighbour, when he begs a kindneſs of thee, ſaying; I cannot now; come another time; to morrow thou ſhalt ſee what I will do for thee: when if thou hadſt a heart to it, thou couldſt ſupply him now, as well as then; and who can tell what ſhall be to morrow?

Ver. 29. *Deviſe not evil againſt thy neighbour, ſeeing he dwelleth ſecurely by thee.*] And let not the quietneſs of any Man's temper, much leſs the confidence he hath of thy honeſty and goodneſs, tempt thee to contrive any miſchief to him: for the more ſecurely he relies on thy vertue, and the leſs miſtruſt he hath of any harm from thee, the greater wickedneſs it will be, ſo much as to have it in thy thoughts to do him any injury.

Ver. 30. ¶ *Strive not with a man without cauſe, if he have done thee no harm.*] ¶ For inſtance, do not bring falſe Actions againſt any Neighbour, nor vex him with cauſleſs or unneceſſary Suits at Law: no, nor ſo much as pretend a cauſe for quarrelling and falling out with him, when he hath done nothing to deſerve it of thee.

Ver. 31. ¶ *Envy thou not the oppreſſour, and chuſe none of his ways.*] ¶ And what though thou ſhouldſt ſee men thrive by oppreſſion and violence, let not that provoke thee to emulate them; that is, to wiſh thy ſelf in their condition, by imitating them in any of their injurious proceedings.

Ver. 32. *For the froward* is *abomination to the* LORD: *but his ſecret* is *with the righteous.*] For he that perverſly departs from all the rules of truth and juſtice, is above all expreſſion abominable to the LORD; even in his higheſt proſperity: but the LORD is a Friend to men of ſincere integrity; who know the ſecret of his Providence in raiſing thoſe wicked Oppreſſors ſo high, that they may have the more dreadful fall.

Ver. 33. ¶ *The curſe of the* LORD is *in the houſe of the wicked: but he bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt.*] ¶ The evil doer is under the curſe of the LORD, tho' he live in the moſt ſtately Palace: but juſt and good men ought to look upon themſelves as under his care and bleſſing; and therefore very happy in the meaneſt Cottage.

Ver. 34. ¶ *Surely he ſcorneth the ſcorners: but he giveth grace to the lowly.*] ¶ Thoſe proud Oppreſſors and Scoffers at good Men, he will undoubtedly, not only confound, but expoſe to ſcorn, and make them ridiculous in the eyes of the World: but cauſe the humble, modeſt and meek (who bear even their inſolent ſcoffs patiently) to be had in honour and highly eſteemed.

Ver. 35. *The wiſe ſhall inherit glory, but ſhame ſhall be the promotion of fools.*] They may be deſpiſed and debaſed for a time, but in the iſſue they ſhall be accounted the only wiſe Men; and leave an excellent never-dying fame behind them: when thoſe impious Men ſhall be famous for nothing, but the ſhame and diſgrace that ſhall fall upon them.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The dulneſs, ſluggiſhneſs and forgetfulneſs of Mankind in their principal concernments, are ſo notorious, that we need not wonder the Wiſe Man repeats the very ſame things, and quickens our attention to them, in the beginning of this Chapter. Which he thought neceſſary to excite again (v. 10.) *and again* (v. 20.) *becauſe all his pains, he knew, would be loſt without ſerious conſideration of what he ſaid: and* the very firſt ſtep to Wiſdom, is to have a mind to be wiſe.

And to make his Exhortations the more acceptable, he acquaints the Reader with the Leſſons which his own Father and Mother were wont to teach him (v. 3, 4, &c.) *and the great benefit he had received by them. Which gave him the greater confidence to preſs every one to follow his example of obſequiouſneſs to good counſels, as the ſureſt way to be happy: and by no means to imitate the examples of the wicked, from which he diſſwades by many arguments* (v. 14, 15, &c.) *and beſeeches they may be ſo duly pondered* (v. 20, 21, &c.) *that they produce in every one a watchfulneſs over his own heart, his mouth, his eyes, his feet: as may be ſeen in the concluſion of the Chapter.*

The whole Chapter from v. 4. *may be conceived to be the words of* David *as well as* Solomon's. *But I have extended* David's *advice no further than unto* v. 10. *and there make* Solomon *to reſume his exhortation; and urge upon his Son what his Father had taught him.*

There is one Proverbial ſpeech *in* v. 27. *which needs no explication. Some would have another,* v. 16. *but I can ſee no reaſon for it.*

The Principal Inſtructions in this Chapter are theſe.

The care that Parents ought to take, to inſtruct their Children diligently: *and the greater they are (ſuppoſe* Princes*) the more accurate ought their Education to be, as* Solomon's *was,* v. 3, 4, &c. *And above all things* the excellence of Wiſdom and Vertue is to be inculcated: *for this excites a deſire of it; and that's the very beginning of it, as ſome expound thoſe words,* v. 7. *In which ſenſe they are admirably explained in the Book of* Wiſdom, VI. 12, 13, 14, 17. *Next to this they are to be* cautioned againſt evil Company, as the bane of Youth: *and the* wretchedneſs of their life that live wickedly *is to be repreſented;* and the happineſs, comfort and ſatisfaction of theirs that live vertuouſly, *which increaſes as their days and their vertues do,* v. 18. *Next they are to be*

taught how necessary it is to be constant in reading pious Books, especially the holy Scriptures, *v.* 21. *And* to have an upright heart, *sincerely disposed to follow such directions; upon which all depends, both their well or ill-doing, and their well or ill-being.* Watchfulness also over the Senses *is commended, as of great use to preserve the Affections from being corrupted.*

1. HEar, *ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.*] Listen then all ye that are desirous to learn, unto the Instructions which, out of a paternal affection, I bring from God unto you: hearken to them, though they correct your present manners; and let your mind be so attentive, that you may know what it is to have a right understanding in all things.

Ver. 2. *For I give you good doctrine, forsake you not my law.*] They are no frivolous or indifferent matters which I teach you; but the most excellent things, and absolutely necessary to your happiness: therefore do not merely attend to them, but strictly observe my Precepts, as the Law and Rule of your life.

Ver. 3. *For I was my father's son, and tender and only* beloved *in the sight of my mother.*] Do as I my self did, who remember, that, when I was a Child, the Son of a most wise and pious Father, and under the careful eye of an affectionate Mother; who loved me most dearly above all her Children, and while I was soft and flexible, and apt to receive good impressions, lookt to my education with great circumspection;

Ver. 4. *He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments and live.*] My Father was wont to tutor and instruct me (1 *Chron.* XXVIII. 8. XXIX. 2.) saying, mind my words, and faithfully retain them, not only in thy memory, but in thy affections; observe my Commandments, and thou shalt enjoy long happiness.

Ver. 5. *Get wisdom, get understanding: forget* it *not, neither decline from the words of my mouth.*] And this is the thing I require of thee, not so much to seek after Riches, as to treasure up Wisdom; and endeavour to understand how to behave thy self upon all occasions; and when thou art well informed in thy duty, do not forget it, nor turn aside from the way, into which I will direct thee.

Ver. 6. *Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.*] Quit all things in this World rather than forsake the Precepts of Wisdom; stick to them, and they will preserve thee from innumerable mischiefs; love them sincerely, and they will be a stronger guard than money can procure thee.

Ver. 7. *Wisdom is the principal thing,* therefore *get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.*] And as there is nothing comparable to Wisdom, so the first step to it is to know as much, and to prize it accordingly. Begin therefore to be wise, by looking upon the fear of God as above all earthly Possessions, and by being willing, if it were needful, to give all thou art worth to know what is pleasing to him.

Ver. 8. *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her.*] Thou canst not speak nor think too highly of this Wisdom, as thou shalt find by happy experience. For if thou magnify it above all things, it will raise thy esteem, and make thee great in the World; yea, when thou entertainest it with ardent love, thou shalt become most illustrious in the sight of God and Men.

Ver. 9. *She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.*] Whatsoever else thou hast to commend thee and gain thee honour, this shall add unto it, and make it far more amiable; the fairest ornaments, or the most beautiful Crown that can be set upon thy head shall receive lustre from hence; and be settled there the most securely.

Ver. 10. *Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings: and the years of thy life shall be many.*] Thus my Father was wont to discourse to me, as I do to thee, my Son; whom I earnestly again intreat (*v.* 1.) to consider what I say; and to believe it; and then I promise thee, what he did me (*v.* 4.) that thou shalt lead a long and happy life.

Ver. 11. *I have taught thee in the way of wisdom: I have led thee in right paths.*] I have already taught thee, and will still inform thee in the wisest course unto it; not in those crooked ways of fraud and falseness, *&c.* which many take; but in the directed paths of integrity and truth, in which I intend, as I have done hitherto, to lead thee.

Ver. 12. *When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitned, and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*] And if thy actions and designs have no other rule, thou shalt be at ease, and free from those straits and difficulties which others meet withal: and in case thy business shall require haste, this will be the safest, as well as the most inoffensive (if not the shortest) way to accomplish thy ends.

Ver. 13. *Take fast hold of instruction, let* her *not go; keep her, for she* is *thy life.*] Resolve to try it, and, tho' it should be contrary to thy present sense, yet do not refuse this Instruction which I give thee; but take such fast hold of it, as never for want of care and pains, to let it slip out of thy mind; keep it as a most precious treasure, for all thy happiness depends upon it.

Ver. 14. ¶ *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil* men.] ¶ And if thou really intendest to be guided by me, remember the advice I gave thee in the beginning (*ch.* 1. 10.) not so much as to enter upon their wicked course of life, or to keep them company, who regard not God, and are injurious to Men: or if thou hast been seduced into it, be not perswaded by their seeming posterity, and thriving condition to continue in it.

Ver. 15. *Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.*] Avoid it therefore with a just abhorrence; come not near it, but get as far

far as thou canſt from their Society: and decline all occaſions that might invite thee into it, as dangerous temptations.

Ver. 16. *For they ſleep not except they have done miſchief; and their ſleep is taken away, unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall.*] For as miſchief is their buſineſs, ſo they purſue it with a reſtleſs diligence: there being thoſe among them, for inſtance, that cannot be quiet, nor have any ſatisfaction, till they have executed their villainous intentions; but perpetually diſturb themſelves, that they may ruine others.

Ver. 17. *For they eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence.*] For they live by robbery and ſpoil; having no other meat and drink, but what is the fruit of the rapine and violence, and not of their honeſt labours.

Ver. 18. *But the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.*] Which makes a wide difference between them and righteous Men; whoſe pure and innocent life is full of honour as well as joy; which increaſes continually together with their vertue; proceeding (like the ſplendour of the Sun, which nothing can extinguiſh, nor hinder in its courſe) till come to the higheſt pitch of joy and glory.

Ver. 19. *The way of the wicked is as darkneſs: they know not at what they ſtumble.*] Whereas thoſe wicked People live moſt uncomfortably, as well as baſely and vilely; going on blindly to their own deſtruction (of which they are in conſtant danger, and grows more and more upon them) and yet they know not (no more than men in thick darkneſs) what miſchief it is that ſuddenly may befall them.

Ver. 20. ¶ *My ſon, attend to my words, incline thine ear unto my ſayings.*] ¶ Therefore I do not without reaſon once more repeat my requeſt unto thee (*v.* 1, 10.) that thou wilt give diligent heed to my advice; and ſeriouſly conſider thoſe exhortations, which proceed from a ſincere affection to thy welfare.

Ver. 21. *Let them not depart from thine eyes: keep them in the midſt of thine heart.*] Read them over and over again, and keep them perpetually in mind; or rather preſerve them ſtudiouſly, and lay them up, as a moſt precious treaſure, in the cloſeſt affections of thy heart.

Ver. 22. *For they* are *life unto thoſe that find them, and health to all their fleſh.*] For they will make all thoſe exceeding happy, both in body and ſoul, that come thoroughly acquainted with them: and, how various ſoever their temper and condition be, will prove an univerſal remedy for all their griefs and troubles.

Ver. 23. ¶ *Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it* are *the iſſues of life.*] ¶ And charge thy ſelf with this, above all other cares, to let ſuch a ſtrict guard upon the inward thoughts, motions and affections of thy ſoul (which are beſieged with many enemies) that thy conſent be never obtained to any thing, which thou oughteſt to refuſe: for thy living well or ill depends on this; and ſuch as thy caution and watchfulneſs is in this, ſuch will the actions of thy life be, which flow from thence.

Ver. 24. *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverſe lips put far from thee.*] And as they that defend a City againſt an Enemy, ſet a ſtrong guard at the Gates and Poſterns, ſo do thou upon thy Ears and upon thy Mouth, never ſpeaking things contrary to Truth, Honeſty, and Religion thy ſelf; nor liſtning unto thoſe that do, but baniſhing both, as far as is poſſible, from thy familiarity.

Ver. 25. *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look ſtreight before thee.*] The Eyes alſo are dangerous inlets into the heart; and therefore watch them well that they do not gaze about, and faſten on every object that invites them: but be fixed upon one ſcope, as thy thoughts ought to be, from which let nothing divert them.

Ver. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed.*] And before thou fixeſt and reſolveſt upon any action, examine and weigh it thoroughly, whether it be agreeable to the rule of life, and the end thou aimeſt at: and ſo thou ſhalt be conſtant to thy ſelf, and confirmed in a ſtedfaſt courſe of well-doing.

Ver. 27. *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*] From which do not ſuffer thy ſelf to be drawn aſide, either to ſuperſtition on the one hand, or to contempt or neglect of Religion on the other: let neither love of Friends, nor hatred of Enemies, neither hope of pleaſure and gain, nor fear of pain and damage, neither proſperous nor croſs events, ever move thee to turn into either extremes from the rule of vertue: but, whatſoever inclination thou findeſt that way, do not proceed to commit the leaſt ſin againſt GOD, or againſt thy Neighbour.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

There being nothing to which Youth is ſo prone, as to give up themſelves to ſatisfie their fleſhly deſires, and nothing proving ſo pernicious to them, if they do it with Harlots, the Wiſe Man gives a new caution againſt thoſe impure Luſts, which he had taken notice of before (Ch. II. 16, 17, *&c.*) *as great obſtructions to Wiſdom: and with repeated intreaties begs attention to ſo weighty an argument, which here he proſecutes more largely, and preſſes not only with ſingular elegance, but with powerful reaſons. Which in the heat of youth men are not forward to conſider; but if they would be ſo ſober, Solomon hath ſaid enough to deter them from whoredom.*

Whoſe miſerable effects he deſcribes by ſeveral apt reſemblances (Ver. 4, 5.) *which ſhew how, by this vice, men loſe their honour, their time, their health, and eſtate; and at laſt* (as he ſhews afterwards) *lie down in ſorrow, and end their days in an unprofitable repentance. And therefore, for the prevention of this, he commends the uſe of marriage, and a paſſionate love for a man's own Wife; which he deſcribes allegorically:* firſt [*a*], *under the compariſon of a domeſtick fountain; where a man may quench his natural thirſt, and from whence ſtreams* (i. e. Children) *may be derived abroad*

to

to ſerve the publick good, &c. and ſecondly, under the compariſon of a young Hind *and a* young wild Goat; *which are taken notice of by Authors that write of Animals (particularly* Oppianus) *to be loving Creatures; and which in ancient times were play-fellows (as one may call them) for the greateſt perſons, who kept them in their Palaces, and diverted themſelves with them, as a lovely ſort of Creature, whom they delighted to adorn with Chains and Garlands and ſuch like things. About which* Bochartus *among others may be conſulted; who hath demonſtrated that the* Jaalah *(which we tranſlate a* Roe) *is a Creature that lived in mountainous places, and could climb up the ſteepeſt Rocks. Unto which, as well as to a* young Hind, Solomon *compares a good Wife, becauſe of the ſimplicity, ſoftneſs, good nature of this kind of Creature; and other qualities mentioned by ancient Authors. Who abundantly ſatisfie us, what reaſon the Wiſe Man had to make choice of theſe compariſons, to repreſent the pleaſure of ardent love between Man and Wife; when it is natural without conſtraint; ſincere, ſimple, gentle, without moroſeneſs, ſuſpicions, or pride: which good qualities are not to be found in Harlots; but may be met with in a Wife. From whence he ſhews the unreaſonableneſs, nay, unaccountable folly of preferring fornication and vagrant luſts, before the innocent joys of a married life (v. 20.) to which a man, who conſiders his own good, would chuſe to be tied that he may avoid the inconveniences, or rather miſeries to which the luſts of uncleanneſs reduce him: but eſpecially the heavy judgment of* God; *who having ordained marriage for the comfort of Mankind and the preſerving ſociety (v. 21, &c.) will not therefore let the contempt of it go unpuniſhed.*

The principal things to be learnt in this Chapter are; not to believe every thing to be good for us, that pleaſes the fleſh for the preſent, *v.* 3, &c. *but* in the beginning of any pleaſure, to look to the end of it; *to* avoid the company of Harlots: *to* uſe due care in the choice of a Wife: *to* love her too much, rather than too little; *to* reſtrain our ſelves from inordinate affection, by the conſideration of God's omnipreſence, *&c.*

The Proverbial Sayings are obvious enough, in v. 3, 4, 15. *I ſhall only give an account of my tranſlating* עדה v. 14. [b] *the* Aſſembly of Judges: *for in many other places, beſides thoſe quoted there in the Paraphraſe, it ſignifies the* LXX Elders *or* Senators *who judged the People: as in the XX.* Joſh. 6. *and XXVII.* Numb. 21. *where R.* Solomon *thus expounds* בל העדה all the Congregation. *And ſo truly it ſeems plainly to be uſed XV.* Numb. 24, *&c. where the Sacrifice is different from that preſcribed in IV.* Levit. 13, *&c. and therefore the ſin was different, and the* Congregation *for whom this was offered, were* the Repreſentatives of the whole Congregation; *or, as they now ſpeak, the great* Sanhedrin.

1. *My ſon, attend unto my wiſdom,* and *bow thine ear to my underſtanding.*] I cannot too often awaken thine attention (whoever thou art that putteſt thy ſelf under my Inſtruction. See Chap. II. 1. III. 1, 21, *&c.*) eſpecially in things of ſuch moment as I am going to treat of: and therefore again I beſeech thee, both to mind diligently, and to conſider what I take to be true Wiſdom, and more than ordinary Prudence.

Ver. 2. *That thou mayeſt regard diſcretion, and* that *thy lips may keep knowledge.*] Which if thou obſerveſt, it will make thee ſo skilful and diſcreetly cautious, that thou ſhalt not only be able to preſerve thy ſelf from the moſt ſubtil and dangerous deceits; but upon occaſion to adviſe others, and keep them from being cheated.

Ver. 3. ¶ *For the lips of a ſtrange woman drop* as *an honey-comb, and her mouth* is *ſmoother than oyl.*] ¶ As too many are by the arts of an Harlot, from whom thou oughteſt to eſtrange thy ſelf as much as if ſhe were not of the commonwealth of *Iſrael*; for ſhe pretending the greateſt love, allures inexperienced youth by her flattering ſpeeches, and ſweet voice perhaps and ſongs, wherewith ſhe inchants them; and making them believe they ſhall taſte nothing but the moſt delicious pleaſures, her ſoft and ſmooth inticements ſlip down glibly into their unwary hearts, which are taken with her.

Ver. 4. *But her end is bitter as wormwood, ſharp as a two-edged ſword.*] But the beginning of this love is not ſo ſweet, as the concluſion is bitter; and therefore think of both together, and believe what I now tell thee without making a trial: that after a ſhort pleaſure follows long pain, by the impairing Mens health, ſtrength, eſtates, and credit; which they cannot reflect upon without trouble and vexation, and (if ſhe do not quite deſtroy their reaſon) be filled with remorſe of conſcience and anguiſh of ſpirit: for like a ſword that cuts on both ſides, ſhe wounds both Soul and Body.

Ver. 5. *Her feet go down to death: her ſteps take hold on hell.*] In ſhort, leads thoſe that follow her to an untimely, ſhameful and miſerable end: to have never ſo little to do with her, is to approach to certain and inevitable deſtruction; not only here, but in another World.

Ver. 6. *Leſt thou ſhouldeſt ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable,* that *thou canſt not know* them.] For tho' thou may'ſt think to make a retreat in time, thou wilt be deceived: ſhe having more ways than thou canſt ever know (winding and turning her ſelf into a thouſand ſhapes) to keep thee from ſo much as deliberating about thy return to a vertuous courſe of life.

Ver. 7. *Hear me now, therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.*] All which conſidered ſhould incline thoſe that read theſe things, to be obedient to me: who do not deſire to reſtrain them from any thing that will make them happy; but in tender affection adviſe them, not to be inticed by her flatteries to depart from thoſe fatherly counſels, which out of mere kindneſs I give unto them.

Ver. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe.*] If all will not be governed by them, yet do thou, whoſe mind is awakened to attend unto me, wholly ſhun all familiarity with her; nay, ſo much as the leaſt aſpect towards her: avoid her as thou wouldeſt the Plague; and be ſo far from going into her Chamber, as not to come near the door of her Houſe.

Ver. 9. *Leſt thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel.*] Leſt thou forfeit all the reputation, which perhaps thou haſt got by worthy actions, and grow contemptible among thy Friends and Acquaintance; who ſee thee prefer the company of Harlots, and their baſe Attendants, before that of the moſt vertuous Perſons: and thereby thou loſe, not only thy fame, but ſacrifice the flower of thine age, and thy precious time, to one that doth not love thee a jot; but could ſee thee periſh without any pity.

Ver. 10. *Leſt ſtrangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours* be *in the houſe of a ſtranger,*] And that will be the iſſue of thy impurity; which waſtes firſt the ſtrength and vigour of thy Body, and then thy Money and Eſtate upon a ſtrange Family, perhaps of another Country: whoſe filthy Luſts are ſatiated at the expence of thy Spirits; and whoſe Houſe and Table are furniſhed with the fruit of thy care and labours.

Ver. 11. *And thou mourn at the laſt, when thy fleſh and thy body are conſumed,*] And when things are come to this paſs, that thy credit, thy friends, thy precious time, thy health, thy eſtate, and thy pleaſure too are all gone, and nothing left but an heavy heart, and skin and bone; then thou begin unprofitably to groan and lament; nay, perhaps to roar out thy grief in a moſt deplorable manner:

Ver. 12. *And ſay, How have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproof?*] Saying, How ſtupidly fooliſh have I been, in not conſidering all this ſooner? how ſenſleſsly bent upon my own ruin? I am amazed to think how I hated the cautions that were given me to avoid her company; and inwardly deſpiſed (how civilly ſoever in outward ſhow I received them) the juſt reproofs I had afterward for going to her.

Ver. 13. *And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers; nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me?*] I wanted no good Inſtructions of my Parents, Tutors, Friends, and God's miniſters; who informed me of the danger, and taught me how to eſcape it: but, alas! I was ſo ſottiſh as not to obey them; ſo contumacious, that I did not ſo much as conſider what they ſaid unto me.

Ver. 14. *I was almoſt in all evil, in the midſt of the congregation and aſſembly.*] But gave up my ſelf to follow my luſts, which in a ſhort time ingaged me in almoſt all kind of wickedneſs; from which the reverence of no perſons could reſtrain me: but openly, in the face of the moſt publick and ſolemn Aſſemblies of God's people; even before the Magiſtrates and Judges (XXV. *Numb.* 7. XXXV. 12.) I boldly committed them. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 15. ¶ *Drink waters out of thine own ciſtern; and running waters out of thine own well.*] ¶ Such are the fruitleſs moans of a man, that hath quite exhauſted himſelf in thoſe lewd courſes; which ſhew how much better it is to follow the advice which I now give thee. Marry, and in a Wife of thine own enjoy the pleaſures thou deſireſt, and be content with them alone; innocent, chaſte, and pure pleaſures; as much different from the other, as the clear waters of a wholſome fountain, are from thoſe of a dirty lake or puddle.

Ver. 16. *Let thy fountains be diſperſed abroad, and rivers of waters in the ſtreets.*] Of whom thou may'ſt have a lawful Iſſue, which thou needeſt not be aſhamed to own; but openly produce and ſend them abroad, like ſtreams from a Spring, to ſerve the publick good; nay, a numerous progeny may be derived from your happy ſociety, and match into divers other honeſt families.

Ver. 17. *Let them be only thine own, and not ſtrangers with thee.*] Children that acknowledge no other Father, becauſe they ſpring from one whom thou enjoyeſt (like a fountain in thy own ground) to thy ſelf alone: being taught by thy confining thy ſelf to her, never to admit any ſtranger to thy bed; but to keep it ſolely unto thee.

Ver. 18. *Let thy fountain be bleſſed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.*] Happy ſhalt thou every way be in ſuch a Wife; whom I adviſe thee to take in thy youth, and avoiding thoſe filthy, cruel Harlots (*v.* 9.) to ſolace thy ſelf in her innocent and delightful company: whereby thou wilt long preſerve thy youth, which they ſpeedily deflower, *v.* 10.

Ver. 19. Let her be as *the loving hind, and pleaſant roe, let her breaſts ſatisfie thee at all times, and be thou raviſht always with her love.*] Love her and cheriſh her, with a moſt tender affection; and let her always ſeem amiable in thy eyes: if thou wouldeſt recreate and diſport thy ſelf (as ſome are wont to do with young fawns, and other beautiful creatures of like kind) let it be with her, as the ſweeteſt companion; in whoſe embraces take ſuch ſatisfaction, as to forget all other, and to be exceſſively tranſported with her as long as you live. *See* Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 20. *And why wilt thou, my ſon, be raviſht with a ſtrange woman, and embrace the boſom of a ſtranger?*] Conſider, my Son, (*v.* 1.) what I ſay, and deny if thou canſt, that it is an unaccountable folly to ſeek that in a vile Harlot (to whom thou oughteſt to be as great a ſtranger, as to her Religion) which thou may'ſt more fully, more pleaſantly, ſecurely, and conſtantly, as well as more innocently, enjoy in a pious Wife of thine own Nation.

Ver. 21. *For the ways of man* are *before the eyes of the* LORD, *and he pondereth all his goings.*] And which is moſt conſiderable, enjoy with the approbation and favour of the LORD: from whom no man can hide his moſt private actions, but he plainly ſees and weighs all he doth, whereſoever he be; and will exactly proportion rewards and puniſhments, according as he behaves himſelf.

Ver. 22. ¶ *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.*] ¶ If he be a wicked Fornicater or Adulterer, for instance, let him not think to escape, because he is so cunning that no body observes him, or so powerful that none can call him to account: for his own manifold iniquities shall arrest and apprehend him; and he shall need no other chains to bind and hold him fast, to answer for them to GOD.

Ver. 23. *He shall die without instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.*] Whose sentence upon such a Person is this; that he shall inevitably perish, (*v.* 5.) because he refused to follow these Instructions; and not only miss of his aim of being happy, but, like men that wander from the right way, precipitate himself into unexpected ruin (*v.* 9, 10, 11.) because he was such an egregious fool, as to take no warning by all that could be said to him; but still to commit innumerable sins, (*v.* 13, 14.) though he was told the many inconveniences; nay, mischiefs they would bring upon him.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

For the securing of the peace and happiness of a married life (which the Wise Man had commended in the foregoing Chapter) he here adds two cautions; one against suretiship, *the other against* sloth: *which make great discontents in a Family, by bringing it to poverty. He illustrates both by elegant similitudes; especially the latter, by the example of the* Ant: *Who borrows of none, and yet is not in danger to starve; laying up in store, by a notable industry, sufficient provision in due season against a time of need. Which the great* LORD [a] Bacon *ingeniously applies (in the beginning of his* Sixth *Book of the* Advancement of Learning) *to the improvement of Arts and Sciences,* by every one's bringing his grain. *And in this business he defines the* slothful *to be;* whose only care it is to live upon the main stock; but not to improve it by sowing the ground of Sciences over again, and reaping a new harvest. *This is the sum of the* eleven *first verses.*

And upon this occasion he annexes the description of a deceitful knave (v. 12, &c.) *who cares not by what wicked arts he lives, when he is reduced to poverty. Whose character he gives from his* mouth, *his* eyes, feet, fingers, heart *and* tongue. *And after a* septenary *of vices* (v. 16, &c.) *which he represents as most odious to* GOD, *he returns to his former Argument; to give cautions against uncleanness, especially* Adultery, (v. 20, 24, &c.) *which as it is many times the effect of* Idleness, *so he shews is the way to bring one to* poverty; *nay, to indanger one's life, or to bring inevitably upon him some other mischief: not only infamy, but the hatred and revenge of that person who is wronged by the* Adulterer; *who hereby puts himself into a worse condition than that of a* Thief. [b] *They that would see the terrible effects of this* jealousie *fully and lively described, let them read* St. Chrysostom, περὶ παρθενίας, chap. 52. *Where he observes, among other things, that ἡ τῆς ἀνθρώπου φύσεως ἀλλὰ καὶ θηρίων, &c.* this Disease is wont to breed and bring forth not only an intolerable heaviness of mind, but an insupportable rage; *and that,* such is the madness of this distemper, that it is not cured, no not by the revenge it takes upon him that is the cause of it.

The principal points of Wisdom to be learnt in this Chapter are these; care of our Family; caution in ingaging for others; diligence in some honest employment; hatred of idleness as contrary to nature; not to contemn the meanest instructor, but to learn something even of the smallest Creature; *and* to improve the present time; to dread the mischievous effects of poverty, especially that which comes by idleness; *(the effect of which is too oft the loss of all conscience,* v. 12, 13, *&c.)* to give good heed to the Admonitions of our Parents and Instructors, *when they teach the will of* GOD: *and above all things,* to fortify our selves against the sins of uncleanness. *About which the Wise-man gives the more frequent cautions, because youth is not more prone to them, than they are pernicious to youth. Who ought therefore not only to weigh diligently the miserable consequences of them, especially of* Adultery *(which he represents in the conclusion of the Chapter) but carefully to avoid the occasions of such sins; and faithfully to suppress the first motions towards them,* v. 25, &c. [c] *Where he gives a particular charge to watch over our* eyes *(which are the inlets to love) and uses a remarkable phrase to express the danger of gazing upon an evil Woman; lest he be* taken *or* caught *with her eye-lids; which he seems to compare to* nets *as other Authors do. Particularly* Philostratus *in his* Epistles; *where he often speaks of the τὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων δίκτυα,* nets of the eyes; *and hath in these elegant words expressed the power of love which resides in the* eye-lids, *here mentioned.* ὁ Ἔρως τὰς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀκμὰς οἶδεν, οὐ τόξοις ἐοικὼς πλανήταις, ἀλλὰ ῥᾳστώνης βλεφάρου τοξεύων, ἰσχυρᾷ κατὰ μικρὸν ἐπιβάσει, &c. *Epist.* Γναθί.

It would be too long to note the Proverbial *Speeches in this Chapter. I shall only give a brief account of them, and of one phrase in this Chapter that needs a little explication.*

[d] *As for the* Proverbial *Speech it is* v. 11. *upon which the Lord* Bacon *hath made a very ingenious observation; distinguishing in this manner, between the* poverty that comes as a Traveller, *and the* want that comes as an armed Man: *that the* shipwrack of fortune falls upon Prodigals, or such as are careless of their Estates, by insensible degrees of the first: with soft silent paces, like a Traveller, and is hardly perceived: but soon after necessity invades him, like an armed Man; that is, presses upon him so hard, that he feels it plainly, and perceives there is no resistance to be made. *And thereupon he gives this prudent advice, to* prevent the Traveller, and to be well provided against the armed Man. *But it is sufficient to have noted this here, (out of his eighth Book of the* Advancement of Learning, *ch.* 2. *parab.* 5.) *which they that please may make*

make use of upon occasion. In my Paraphrase *I have waved this nice curiosity; because I observe the Wise Man generally repeats the same thing in other words, without any such distinction.*

[e] *As for the* phrase *I spoke of, it is v.* 31. *where it is said a Thief shall* restore sevenfold *(as we translate the word) when the Law of* Moses *enjoins no such restitution, but much less (XXII.* Exod. 1, 4.) *and there is no reason to think the Law was altered in after-times. Therefore I have followed another use of the word* Schivatajim, *which signifies not any determinate number, but only such as is perfect and compleat in its kind; as may be seen IV.* Gen. 15, 24. *XII.* Psal. 7. *XXXIII.* 26.

1. *My Son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,*] And now, my Son, *(see* ch. II. 1. III. 1, 17.) that no difference may arise between thy Wife and thee; be advised by me, not to pass thy word rashly for the Money which thy Neighbour or Friend borroweth of another; much less stand bound for a Stranger, whose honesty or ability is unknown to thee.

Ver. 2. *Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.*] Young men indeed think this no great matter; but if thou hast been so incautious, as to be drawn into such ingagements, look upon thy self as no longer a free man; but hampered and inslaved in dangerous obligations.

Ver. 3. *Do this now, my son, and deliver thy self, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend: go, humble thy self, and make sure thy friend.*] And therefore, in that case, immediately follow the counsel which I now give thee, my Son; do thy utmost endeavour to be discharged, by pressing thy Friend forthwith to satisfie the debt, or to give thee security against the Creditor: Make no delay, and stick not, if need be, to cast down thy self before him on the ground, and beseech him as readily to grant thy request, as thou wast forward to comply with his: be not modest at all; nor cease to urge and importune him by thy self and by thy Friends, till thou hast prevailed with him.

Ver. 4. *Give not sleep to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eye-lids.*] Be not quiet till this be accomplished; nor take so much as a wink of sleep till thou art eased of this care: which if thou understandest thy self, may well disturb thy rest.

Ver. 5. *Deliver thy self as a roe from the hand* of the hunter, *and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.*] For thou art in the same condition with a young Roe, or silly Bird; that is taken in the toil of the Hunter, or the snare of the Fowler; and therefore struggle, like them, with all thy might, to get loose (if it be possible) and to be released from the bond wherein thou art intangled.

Ver. 6. ¶ *Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise:*] ¶ Nor is industry and diligence requisite in this alone, but in all thy affairs; to which therefore, if thou art slothful, I must excite thee by the example of the Ants; whose orderly and unanimous diligence, in collecting and preserving food for themselves, if thou wilt mark and observe, thou may'st be ashamed to be an idle spectator of their labours; and learn hereafter to imitate their provident care. *See* Arg. [c]

Ver. 7. *Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,*] Which is the more remarkable, because they have none to lead and direct them (as Mankind have) no overseer to exact their labours; no supreme Governor to call them to an account for any negligence.

Ver. 8. *Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.*] And yet they never omit the opportunity they have in Harvest, to make provision against the Winter; but toil perpetually in gathering, and carrying food into the cells they have digged for it in the Earth; where they lay it up and secure it with admirable art; that it may neither be injured by the weather, nor stolen from them by other Creatures.

Ver. 9. *How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?*] O the strange idleness of Mankind! who have many Monitors and Governours, that call upon them again and again, and stir them up in vain to labour. What wretchlessness is this, which makes thee, O sluggard, indulge thy self in laziness and sloth? as if thou wast made for nothing else but to sleep and take thine ease?

Ver. 10. *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.*] Rolling thy self in thy Bed, and ridiculously desiring thy pains may be spared, and thou mayest be suffered still, without any disturbance, to enjoy a little more sleep; when thou hast loytered too long, and put off the care of thy affairs from time to time, till thou hast none left to do it in.

Ver. 11. *So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*] But poverty comes apace upon thee, and before thou art aware leaves thee as naked, as if thou wast stript by a Highway-man; nay, extreme want seizes on thee unavoidably, like an armed Man, which thou canst find no means to resist. *See* Arg. [d]

Ver. 12. ¶ *A naughty person, a wicked man walketh with a froward mouth.* ¶ By which means thou may'st be tempted to become the worst of men, a perfect shark, void of all faith and honesty; whose mouth never speaks a word of truth; but makes it his business by lyes, or flatteries, or slanders, or perjuries, to maintain himself in his idle courses.

Ver. 13. *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers,*] His very Eyes are instruments of deceit, or mischief; for he makes signs with them to his Companions, when they are to play their pranks: or if that be too broad, he secretly treads upon their Toes; or signifies his mind by the motion of his Fingers; for every part of him is imployed to make his wicked meaning understood.

Ver. 14. *Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually, he soweth discord.*] How should it be otherwise when his Heart is a Shop, furnished with nothing but all manner of perverse inclinations; which are perpetually at work

work to contrive ſome miſchief or other: and (if they can do nothing elſe) by caſting ſuſpicions into mens minds one of another, to ſtir up hatred, diſſention, ſtrife, brawlings, law-ſuits, and all manner of diſcord; which is the deſtruction of Families and Kingdoms.

Ver. 15. *Therefore ſhall his calamity come ſuddenly; ſuddenly ſhall he be broken without remedy.*] And ſhall prove his own utter ruin: which, for this very cauſe, ſhall ſooner than he thinks of in a terrible manner come upon him; when he fancies he hath carried his matters ſo cunningly, that no body diſcerns his villany, he ſhall on a ſudden be lookt upon as the beſt of Mankind; and, like a Veſſel broken into little bits, be incurably undone.

Ver. 16. ¶ *Theſe ſix* things *doth the* LORD *hate; yea, ſeven are an abomination unto him;*] ¶ For, among offences of this kind, nothing is more odious to the LORD (who is the diſpenſer of rewards and puniſhments) nothing more oppoſite to the Divine Nature, and which He more ſeverely puniſhes, than theſe *ſix* or *ſeven* things; which are commonly found in looſe Companions, ſuch as I have now deſcribed.

Ver. 17. *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that ſhed innocent bloud,*] *Firſt*, pride and haughtineſs of ſpirit; which ſwelling a man with a vain opinion of himſelf, makes him contemn all others, and overlook them as below his notice. *Secondly*, falſhood, or treachery; which ſtick not at any lyes, or flatteries, or calumnies. And *Thirdly*, a violent, cruel diſpoſition; which makes a man rather embrue his hands in the blood even of an innocent perſon, than not have him removed, who ſtands in the way of his deſigns.

Ver. 18. *An heart that deviſeth wicked imaginations, feet that be ſwift in running to miſchief,*] To which add the fountain of all theſe, and of thoſe that follow; a mind that ſtudies nothing but how by fraud or force (though never ſo injurious to others) to ſatisfie ſome deſire of pleaſure, covetouſneſs, or revenge: which produces *three* other abominable Vices. *Firſt*, forwardneſs to execute ſuch miſchievous intentions and deſires cheerfully, without any check or delay.

Ver. 19. *A falſe witneſs* that *ſpeaketh lyes, and him that ſoweth diſcord among brethren.*] *Secondly*, An Atheiſtical impudence, which makes a man in open court (when he is upon his oath) teſtifie any falſhood againſt his Neighbour; and *laſtly*, ſuch malicious envy, as loves to make the deareſt Friends fall out; and takes pleaſure to ſee thoſe at variance, who ought to be moſt cloſely united in brotherly affection.

Ver. 20. ¶ *My ſon, keep thy father's commandment, and forſake not the law of thy mother.*] ¶ And here, My Son, I muſt remember thee of what I ſaid in the beginning (I. 8.) about a reverend regard unto thy Parents; eſpecially when they warn thee againſt ſuch wickedneſſes as theſe: do not make light of their admonitions; but obſerve the Precepts of thy Father, and let thy Mother's commands be a law to thee. *See* I. 8.

Ver. 21. *Bind them continually upon thine heart,* and *tie them about thy neck.*] Fix them in thy mind, and link thy affections ſo faſt to them, that they may not only be continually before thine eyes; but ſeem the greateſt ornament to all thy words and actions, when they are ordered by their directions.

Ver. 22. *When thou goeſt, it ſhall lead thee; when thou ſleepeſt, it ſhall keep thee; and* when *thou awakeſt, it ſhall talk with thee.*] Thou wilt find the benefit of giving early entertainment to ſuch good counſel from thy Parents, in every paſſage of thy whole life: for when thou goeſt about any buſineſs, it will guide thee to do it honeſtly and ſucceſsfully; when thou lieſt down to ſleep, it will make thee reſt ſecure of the guardianſhip of the Divine Providence over thee; and when thou awakeſt in the morning, ſuggeſt to thy thoughts how thou oughteſt to behave thy ſelf at home and abroad.

Ver. 23. *For the commandment* is *a lamp; and the law* is *light; and reproofs of inſtruction* are *the ways of life:*] In the darkeſt times, and the moſt dubious caſes, it will both direct and comfort thee; for every particular Commandment of GOD (which they teach thee) is like a Candle; and the whole Law is like the light of the Sun; to ſhew thee thy way, and to exhilerate thy Spirits, while thou walkeſt in it: nay, the ſevereſt reproofs, which correct thy errors and reduce thee to obedience, are the way to the greateſt happineſs.

Ver. 24. *To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a ſtrange woman.*] As thoſe inſtructions and reproofs, for inſtance, ought to be accounted, which preſerve thee from being deluded by the flattering ſpeeches, and inticements of a leud Woman: from whom thou oughteſt perfectly to eſtrange thy ſelf, as from a ſink of all wickedneſs.

Ver. 25. *Luſt not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eye-lids.*] Let me adviſe thee again (though I have done it oft, II. 16. V. 3, 4, &c.) not to gaze upon her beauty, or upon her fine attire; but ſuppreſs the very firſt deſire, which a glance of her may have kindled in thy heart: do not conſent to purſue it in the leaſt; much leſs ſuffer thy ſelf to be caught in the nets of her wanton Eyes, and thereby drawn into her dangerous embraces. *See* Arg. [c].

Ver. 26. *For by means of a whoriſh woman,* a man is brought *to a piece of bread: and the adulteres will hunt for the precious life.*] For ſuch is the cunning of a Harlot, that having got a ſilly Youth into her toils, ſhe will hardly let him go, till ſhe have reduced him to the extremeſt beggary; and if ſhe be another Man's Wife, a train is laid for that which is more precious by far than all the treaſures he hath ſpent, *viz.* his deareſt life; which he fooliſhly loſes for the ſhort pleaſure of a ſinful Luſt.

Ver. 27. *Can a man take fire in his boſom, and his cloaths not be burnt?*] He may think, perhaps, to enjoy his pleaſure ſo privately that none ſhall know it; but that's as unlikely, as that a man ſhould take fire ſecretly into his Boſom, and ſo conceal it that it ſhall not break out and burn his Cloaths.

Ver. 28.

Ver. 28. *Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?*] Who ever heard that fire will do no hurt, becauſe it is cloſely lodged? or that any body ever walked barefoot upon red hot Coals, and his feet eſcaped from being burnt?

Ver. 29. *So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife: whoſoever toucheth her, ſhall not be innocent.*] Even ſo it is ſottiſh folly to imagine that a man ſhall ſuffer nothing, who lies with his Neighbour's Wife: let him be who he will that commits that crime, he ſhall not eſcape unpuniſhed.

Ver. 30. Men *do not deſpiſe a thief, if he ſteal to ſatisfie his ſoul when he is hungry:*] For he is not a common Thief, who only ſteals a man's goods, and that perhaps out of extreme neceſſity, merely to ſatisfie his hungry Appetite, which he knows not otherways how to fill: ſuch an one we are apt to pity, and do not expoſe him to ſhame, by whipping him, and laying ſtripes upon his back;

Ver. 31. *But if he be found, he ſhall reſtore ſeven-fold, he ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe.*] But when he is found out, he ſhall only make as compleat a reſtitution (LXXIX. *Pſal.* 12.) as the Law requires (XXII. *Exod.* 1, &c.) though that perhaps may be no leſs than all that he is worth. *See* Argument [*e*].

Ver. 32. But *whoſo committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh underſtanding: he* that *doth it, deſtroyeth his own ſoul.*] But the Adulterer robs a Man of his Wife, without any ſuch neceſſity, there being other and honeſt ways to ſatisfie his deſires; and therefore hath no excuſe, but muſt be lookt upon as a ſtupid Fool void of common underſtanding; and when he is found out be puniſhed, not merely in his eſtate, but with the loſs of his life, XX. *Lev.* 10.

Ver. 33. *A wound and diſhonour ſhall he get, and his reproach ſhall not be wiped away.*] And beſides the quarrels and other troubles wherein this ſin may engage him, his Reputation ſhall receive a deadly wound; and it will make him infamous as long as he lives, and when he is dead; for while his Name laſts it ſhall not be mentioned without reproach; but have a brand of diſgrace ſet upon it, which ſhall never be blotted out.

Ver. 34. *For jealouſie* is *the rage of a man: therefore he will not ſpare in the day of vengeance.*] For no Reſtitution can be made, nor Satisfaction given in this caſe, as there may be in the other; no Prayers neither, or Submiſſions ſhall prevail with the injured Husband; whoſe juſtly provoked indignation riſes up to a furious rage; which will not pity or ſpare the Adulterer (though the publick Juſtice ſhould be aſleep) when he finds an opportunity to be revenged. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 35. *He will not regard any ranſom; neither will he reſt content, though thou giveſt many gifts.*] Though he may be willing to expiate his crime, and redeem his life at any rate, it will not be accepted; the largeſt gifts will be refuſed; and though greater and greater be ſtill offered, they will not appeaſe his wrath: which purſues the Adulterer implacably, and never reſts contented but in his utter ruin.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Chaſtity is a vertue of that conſequence, and Impurity ſuch a pernicious bane of Youth; that the Wiſe Man thought he could not too oft make mention of the danger of the one, to move Men carefully to preſerve the other. And therefore is not contented with what he had already ſaid about this matter, in the latter end of the ſecond *Chapter, and in the whole* fifth *Chapter, and now in the latter part of the* ſixth; *but again repeats it with renewed importunities; deſiring to be heard attentively, eſpecially in the cautions he gives againſt* Adultery; *the avoiding of which he repreſents as a high point of Wiſdom,* v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And the better to ſecure thoſe that deſire to be happy from this ſnare, he repreſents, together with the fillineſs of young Men, the cunning and crafty devices of an impudent Adultereſs. Which is admirably ſet forth from v. 6. *to* v. 21. *Where he begins to ſhew the effects of her courtſhip, and its lamentable concluſion. And thereupon,* v. 24. *renews his intreaties to beware of ſuch Women; who have undone many and great perſons; and to ſtop at the very firſt motion or inclination towards her.*

The ſum of all is, that it is a ſingular benefit *a man hath by true Wiſdom, to be preſerved from ſuch ſins and ſuch miſeries: And therefore we ſhould* ſtudy Wiſdom; *which alone can ſecure us from being deceived by ſuch flatteries, as bewitch ſilly and incautious Souls to their ruin. And herein the* vigilance of Magiſtrates *is required to watch and obſerve (as* Solomon *did,* v. 6, 7.) *the manner of their Subjects; that they may the better obviate and correct their vices: but eſpecially* every man's diligent conſideration *is neceſſary, of ſuch things as* Solomon, *here ſets before him to divert him from ſuch wicked courſes. Particularly the* character of theſe leud women is to be ſtudied; *who are then moſt abominable, when they put on the maſk of piety and devotion. As this ſtrumpet doth* (v. 14.) *in her ſpeech which ſhe makes to the young Man. Where there are two things in my Paraphraſe, of which I owe ſome account to the Reader.*

[a] *The one is in the Beginning of it,* v. 14. *Where I have taken* Schelamin *peace-offerings, of which there were* three *ſorts (VII.* Lev. 11, 12, 16.) *for the laſt of them, offerings of* thankſgiving *for bleſſings already obtained; not of* prayer *for the impetration of bleſſings from* God *(as* Grotius *and others underſtand the word) not yet received. My reaſon is, becauſe ſhe was ſo ſollicitous to have company at her feaſt upon this Sacrifice, that very day. Every body knows that ſuch Sacrifices were to be of the beſt, either of* Bullocks, *or* Sheep, *or* Goats (*III.* Lev 1, 6, 12.) *and that the greateſt part of them fell to the ſhare of the perſon who offered them, that he might feaſt with* God: *that is, all except the fat upon the kidneys, and rump of the Sheep, and the breaſt and right ſhoulder; which was ſufficient to make a liberal entertainment for his*

Friends. But this is not ſo commonly obſerved, that though they might keep this fleſh two days, before it was all ſpent, becauſe there was ſuch plenty of it, yet that is to be underſtood only of the two firſt *ſorts of Peace-offering, for obtaining bleſſings; not of the* Euchariſtical, *or Thank-offerings: which as* Philo *obſerves, were to be eaten the very ſame day they were offered:* that they who had readily received favours from God, might as readily, and without delay, communicate to others. *Which is the account* Abarbinel *alſo gives of this matter: and it is obſervable, that all ſorts of bread were to be joined with this Sacrifice, that every thing might be ready for the Feaſt.*

[b] *The other thing is at the latter end of her ſpeech,* v. 20. *where by the word* Hacceſe *I underſtand the* Full Moon, *as the* Vulgar Latin *doth. With which Tranſlation Interpreters find fault, becauſe it looks like a contradiction, they ſay, to call that day by a name, which ſignifies the Moon* to be covered: *and therefore they tranſlate it rather the* New Moon, *as we do in the margin of our Bibles. But they that can conſult* Lud. de Dieu *upon LXXXI.* Pſal. 3. *will find good reaſon to take it quite otherwiſe; for the* Full Moon; *which giving light then all the night, made it a fit time for a journey, either in Winter (as by the darkneſs of the night,* v. 9. *I ſuppoſe it might now be) when the days are ſhort: or in Summer when the heat made them unfit for travel.*

The Proverbial *Sayings in this Chapter, ſome make* three, *others* four: *all contained in two verſes* 22, *and* 23. *With which I ſhall not trouble the Reader; becauſe I have made them plain enough in the Paraphraſe; and intend not to fill this Book with like ſayings out of other Authors.*

[c] *I ſhould only add that* Rabbim *in the laſt verſe but one, ſignifying* great *men as well as* many, *I have expreſſed both: and* Solomon *himſelf as well as* Sampſon *became an example of the* mighty men *there mentioned who were undone by lewd Women.*

1. MY *ſon, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.*] There is great reaſon then, my Son, (II. *Prov.* 1.) to repeat the caution I have often given thee, againſt this and other vices: and to beſeech thee, to obſerve my Inſtructions, and to lay up my Commandments in ſuch faithful remembrance; that they may not fail to produce the fruit of obedience.

Ver. 2. *Keep my commandments, and live: and my law as the apple of thine eye.*] For if thou wilt be ruled by them, aſſure thy ſelf (as I have ſaid before, IV. 4.) thou ſhalt enjoy long happineſs: therefore obſerve them carefully with a tender affection to them; and, looking upon them as thy ſafeſt guide and director, conſent as ſoon to wound the apple of thine Eye, as in the leaſt to violate any of my Laws.

Ver. 3. *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.*] Do not merely read what I write, imagining thou canſt have continual recourſe to them here in this Book; but be ſo well acquainted with them, as to have them (as we ſpeak) at thy fingers ends: or rather, let them be tranſcribed from hence; into thy very heart.

Ver. 4. *Say unto Wiſdom, Thou* art *my ſiſter; and call underſtanding* thy *Kinſwoman:*] There embrace them with ardent love; and ſet ſuch an high eſteem on Wiſdom, that thou may'ſt invite it more and more unto thee: till it be as familiar with thee as an only Siſter, born at the ſame time with thee; and thou underſtand and delight in all her Precepts, as ſo near a-kin to thee, that thou find them to be the very reaſon and ſenſe of thy own mind.

Ver. 5. *That they may keep thee from the ſtrange woman, from the ſtranger* which *flattereth with her words.*] Which will be a powerful preſervative to thee from the ſnares of the naughty Woman: who, tho' her company be ſo pernicious that God would have thee perfectly eſtranged from her, as if ſhe were not of the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, yet hath powerful charms about her, to flatter thoſe into her embraces, who are not heartily in love with Wiſdom.

Ver. 6. ¶ *For at the window of my houſe I looked through my caſement,*] ¶ Of which a memorable inſtance comes now into my mind; for looking one day from my Chamber, through the lattices of the Window of my Palace;

Ver. 7. *And beheld among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, a young man void of underſtanding.*] I obſerved, among the undiſciplined and unexperienced Striplings of the City, one that was as childiſh and void of conſideration, as he was youthful and eager in his deſires:

Ver. 8. *Paſſing through the ſtreet near her corner, and he went the way to her houſe,*] Who, as if he had a mind to be undone, paſſed idely through the Street, till he came to a Corner, where naughty Women uſe to haunt: walking in as ſtately a manner, as he could deviſe, directly towards one of their Houſes.

Ver. 9. *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:*] It was in the twilight, while he might ſee his way and yet hope to be concealed: in the cloſe of the day; which was followed by a night as dark as pitch, and fit for ſuch works of darkneſs.

Ver. 10. *And behold, there met him a woman* with *the attire of an harlot, and ſubtil of heart.*] There, on a ſuddain, I was ſurpriſed with the ſight of a Woman ſtarting forth; who did not ſtay till he came up to her, but went to meet him in a gaudy laſcivious dreſs, apt to allure a weak young Man: who thought preſently ſhe was in love with him; when her heart, as full of ſubtilty as his was of folly, is reſerved only to her ſelf.

Ver. 11. *(She* is *loud and ſtubborn, her feet abide not in her houſe.*] This is her character: She is full of talk, and of bold unſeemly courtſhip; unruly and not to be controuled or broke of her will; idle alſo and always gadding abroad, as if ſhe had no buſineſs (but with her fooliſh Lovers) at home.

Ver. 12. *Now* is ſhe *without, now in the ſtreets, and lieth in wait at every corner.*] Sometimes ſhe ſtands before her door; and, if that will not do, ſhe goes further into the ſtreets and places

places of greateſt concourſe: and, more eſpecially, waits at every corner (where ſhe may look into two ſtreets at once) to inſnare ſuch as are apt, like ſilly birds, to be taken by her.

Ver. 13. *So ſhe caught him and kiſſed him, and with an impudent face ſaid unto him,*] At one of thoſe corners (as I ſaid) ſhe met this young fool; and, contrary to all the rules of modeſty, caught him hard about the neck and kiſſed him: and after theſe amorous careſſes put on ſtill a bolder face, and, without any bluſhing made this following ſpeech to him;

Ver. 14. I have *peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.*] I am a happy Woman, in many bleſſings that God hath beſtowed upon me, for which I have given him ſolemn thanks this very day: and, as Religion and Cuſtom binds me, I have provided as good a Feaſt as thoſe Sacrifices would afford, which I formerly vowed and now have paid; having no want of any thing, but of ſome good company at home to rejoyce with me. *See* Arg. [*a.*]

Ver. 15. *Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to ſeek thy face, and I have found thee.*] Which made me go abroad to try if I could meet with thee (who art the very perſon whom I came to ſeek) that I might invite and earneſtly beſeech thee to be ſo kind as to bear me company: And, to my great joy, this is added to all my other happineſs, that I have found thee ſpeedily and moſt opportunely.

Ver. 16. *I have deckt my bed with coverings of tapeſtry, with carved* works, *with fine linen of Egypt.*] There ſhall no other pleaſures be wanting when our Feaſt is done; but from the Table we will remove to my Bed: which I have richly adorned with every thing that may pleaſe the eye; and made it as ſoft alſo as heart can wiſh.

Ver. 17. *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*] Where thou ſhalt be entertain'd likewiſe with the ſweeteſt perfumes, that ours or the neighbouring countries could furniſh me withal; ſuch as Myrrh, Aloes, and Cinnamon: wherewith I have ſprinkled my Bed, to render it more grateful to all thy ſenſes.

Ver. 18. *Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning, let us ſolace our ſelves with loves.*] Why do we waſte our time then here in the ſtreet? Come along with me, and let us go thither; and there ſatisfy our deſires to the full with love: we will ſolace our ſelves with the ſweeteſt pleaſures; which ſhall not end till the morning light.

Ver. 19. *For the good-man* is *not at home, he is gone a long journey.*] For there is no fear they ſhould be interrupted or diſturbed; the Man (whom they call my Husband) being from home, and not likely to return in haſte: For he is gone to a place a great way off.

Ver. 20. *He hath taken a bag of money with him,* and *will come home at the day appointed.*] Where he hath much buſineſs to diſpatch; which will detain him ſo long, that I am ſure it will be full moon (and now the new doth ſcarce yet appear, *v.* 9.) before he can be at home again. *See* Arg. [*b.*]

Ver. 21. *With much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him.*] In the repreſenting of theſe, and many other like ſpecious pretences (of great affection to him, of all ſorts of pleaſure, of ſecrecy, and ſafety in their enjoyments) ſhe ſhewed her ſelf ſuch a miſtreſs of her art, that ſhe bowed the heart of the young Man to become her diſciple: and, having wrought upon his inclinations, ſhe purſued her advantage with ſo much cunning; that ſhe rather compelled than attracted him, by her charming voice, and her ſoft alluring language.

Ver. 22. *He goeth after her ſtraightway, as an ox goeth to the ſlaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks:*] For he made not the leaſt objection, but away he went immediately, and followed her like a great Calf (as we ſpeak in our language) or a ſtupid Ox; that fanſies he is led to the paſture, when he is going to be killed; or like a fool, who takes it for an ornament, when the ſtocks are brought for his correction, to be clapt upon his legs.

Ver. 23. *Till a dart ſtrike through his liver, as a bird haſteth to the ſnare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*] Juſt ſo he haſtily threw himſelf into her embraces, and dreamt of nothing but pleaſure; till, like a raſh Souldier that falls unexpectedly into an ambuſh, he received a mortal wound by that, which he fanſied would be his higheſt ſatisfaction; or like a ſilly bird, that greedy of the food which is laid to intice it, never minds the ſnare that is laid together with it: So he eagerly longing to taſte of her Feaſt and the following delights, had not ſo much as a thought, that this was a deſign upon his life; and would not end, but in miſeries infinitely greater than all his joys.

Ver. 24. ¶ *Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.*] ¶ This is a true repreſentation, my dear children (whom I love unfeignedly, not deceitfully like thoſe Harlots) of the folly and danger of theſe lewd courſes, in which youth is prone to be engaged: and therefore do not look upon it as an idle ſpeculation; but give diligent heed unto it, and be ruled by my Advice.

Ver. 25. *Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not aſtray in her paths.*] Let not one of you ſo much as entertain a thought of going to ſuch a woman, much leſs of conſenting to her enticements: or if any of you have been ſo unhappy as to be engaged in her company, let him think it is too much that he hath adventured to turn aſide out of the right way, and not wander till he hath utterly loſt himſelf in thoſe ſtrange paths, and cannot find his way back again.

Ver. 26. *For ſhe hath caſt down many wounded: yea, many ſtrong* men *have been ſlain by her.*] Do not preſume of being ſafe in ſuch courſes, and of making a good retreat at laſt: For many have been the examples of no mean perſons, who have faln in their reputation, their eſtates, their healths, their comforts of life, and in truth have utterly periſhed by her: innumerable are the mighty men, both for valour and for wiſdom, whom ſhe hath brought to ruin. *See* Arg. [*c.*]

Ver. 27. *Her houſe* is *the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*] In ſhort, to follow

low her unto her houſe, as this young man did, is the direct way to hell: every ſtep that is taken to her Bed (unto which ſhe invited him to aſcend) is in truth a going down to the diſmal chambers of death, and to the moſt horrid miſeries.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The folly and danger of yielding to thoſe brutiſh luſts and affections whereby ſo many are miſ-led, having been plainly diſcovered and lively deſcribed in the foregoing Chapter; the Wiſe man proceeds in his deſign, by appealing to all that read theſe things, whether they be not ſufficiently cautioned againſt thoſe courſes which ruin them; and abundant care be not taken to make them really wiſe and happy. For he knew none could anſwer thoſe queſtions negatively which he asks in the beginning of the Chapter, (v. 1, 2, &c.) *but all muſt confeſs they have been informed in the doctrine of Wiſdom. Whom he repreſents as preſent every-where, and commending it ſelf to all ſorts of perſons with a ſincere affection* (v. 6, &c.) *as infinitely better than all the treaſures which they greedily ſeek* (v. 10.) *and to be deſired and valued upon ſo many accounts, that it is not eaſie to number them. Particularly, for that Prudence and that Authority, which it gives to thoſe who are endued with it* (v. 12, 14, 15, &c.) *and more than this, becauſe it makes them approach near unto* God, *the fountain of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, and the original pattern of them,* v. 21, 22, &c.

This is expreſſed in ſuch magnificent language, that though Solomon *I ſuppoſe thought of nothing, but the wiſe directions* God *had given them in his word, revealed to them by his Servant* Moſes *and the Prophets; yet the ancient Chriſtians thought his words might better be applied to the Wiſdom revealed unto us in the Goſpel by the Son of* God: *nay, to the Son of* God *himſelf, the Eternal Word, and Wiſdom of the Father.*

[a] *Whom the* Arians, *by a falſe interpretation of a paſſage in this Chapter,* v. 22, *indeavoured to prove a Creature: but according to the* Hebrew verity, *if this Text belong to that matter, appears to have been, as S.* John *ſpeaks,* with the Father in the beginning, *being his only begotten before all worlds. And ſo the word* קנה *which we tranſlate* poſſeſs *ſometimes ſignifies in Scripture; and as it is thus rendred by the LXX. in the XIII.* Zach. 5. *ſo ought it to be tranſlated in IV.* Gen. 1. *(not I have* gotten *or* poſſeſſed, *but)* I have brought forth *a man from the* Lord: *as* Bochartus *diſcourſes in his* Phaleg, *p.* 784.

But I ſaid, if it belong to that matter, *becauſe the Fathers themſelves are not reſolved, whether theſe words,* v. 22. *may not rather be applied to our bleſſed Saviour, according to his humane Nature. For ſo the great* Athanaſius *himſelf ſometimes expounds them (though at other times he goes the other way) allowing the* Arian *ſenſe of* ἔκτισε, he created me; *this is not to be underſtood, ſaith he (in his* Expoſitio Fidei, *p.* 242. Tom. 1.) *of the Divinity of Chriſt;* "but "σωματικῶς εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν γέγραπται, is written of "Jeſus bodily, *as he was born of the Virgin* "Mary. *For of this* κτισμὸν ἀνθρώπου *(as he* "*ſpeaks) whom he ſent for our Salvation, it* "*may be ſaid truly that he was* the beginning "of God's ways: *we have acceſs by him to* God "*the Father, as he himſelf ſaith,* I am the way, "*which leads to the Father.*" *And afterward in his epiſtle about the Decrees of the* Nicene Council, *p.* 262. *he gloſſes upon theſe words in this manner;* "*The perſon who here ſpeaks* "*is indeed our Saviour, who is to be conceived* "*to ſay this when he took a body,* the Lord "created me in the beginning of his ways "*For as with reſpect to his being the Son of* "God, *it is moſt agreeable to ſay,* he was al-"ways, and in the boſom of the Father: "*So, being made a man, this ſaying was very* "*becoming,* the Lord created me." *And, to name no more places, he interprets it thus ſeveral times in his* third Oration *againſt the* Arians, *p.* 415, 417, &c. *where he hath theſe words,* It is as if he had ſaid, My Father made me a body, and created me to be among men for their Salvation.

But this not being the ſenſe of the words which Solomon *firſt intended, I ſhall not build my Paraphraſe upon it; but take wiſdom here, as it ſignifies in other places of this Book and hath been hitherto deſcribed. Whom* Solomon *now celebrates for her moſt venerable* Antiquity, *as* Ariſtobulus *obſerves to* Ptolomy *in* Euſebius *his* Præper. Evang. *L. XIII. p.* 667.) *and introduces like a moſt beautiful perſon, no leſs than a Queen; or rather ſome Divine Being (infinitely to be preferred before that baſe Strumpet ſpoken of in the foregoing Chapter.) Who having finiſhed her own praiſes, which, the truth is, better agree to that heavenly Doctrine afterwards delivered by our* Lord *Jeſus Chriſt (who was the Wiſdom of the Father, both as the Eternal* ΛΟΓΟΣ *ſubſiſting with him before all worlds, and as he was anointed by the Holy Ghoſt to declare to us all the counſel of* God) *concludes with an earneſt invitation unto all to become acquainted with her inſtructions; if they meant to be happy and would avoid the greateſt miſeries,* v. 32, 33, &c.

There are ſo many notable leſſons to be learnt out of this Chapter, that it would make this Preface too long, if I ſhould mention them all. I ſhall therefore name only one Doctrinal Point, *that if this Chapter be at all to be underſtood of the Divinity of the Son of* God *(which the* Arians *believed) then both his* Eternity *is moſt plainly here aſſerted, and alſo his diſtinct* Subſiſtence *and perſonality, as we ſpeak,* v. 22, 30. *And theſe* two Practical. Firſt, *that* it is a vain pretence we make to Wiſdom, if the fear of God and true Vertue be wanting, *v.* 13, 20. *and* Secondly, *the whole Chapter ſuppoſes, what the laſt verſe more particularly expreſſes, that* every man's death and deſtruction is from himſelf; *who wrongs his own Soul; and that againſt the deſire and earneſt frequent importunities of the Wiſdom of* God: *unto which he will not hearken; but perverſly rejects the ſeaſonable reproofs and the wholſome advices, which, on many occaſions, he meets withal to prevent his ruin.*

They

They that follow the vulgar Latin *fancy they find a Proverbial ſaying,* v. 13. *where that which we tranſlate a* froward mouth, *they tranſlate a* mouth with two tongues: *But I have followed the* Hebrew, *which ſpeaks of a worſe ſort of* perverſe *language than that phraſe alone ſignifies.*

1. DOTH *not wiſdom cry? and underſtanding put forth her voice?*] Can you then hereafter pretend ignorance, and ſay you never had any caution given you againſt theſe ſnares? Or rather, have I not the greateſt reaſon to chide you for your ſtupidity in hearkning unto thoſe ſecret allurements to the deeds of darkneſs, when their ſhamefulneſs is ſo apparent? and you have had ſo many open and loud admonitions given you to be wiſer; and ſuch ſerious and earneſt endeavours have been uſed, by repeated inſtructions and reproofs to reclaim you from your folly?

Ver. 2. *She ſtandeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.*] There is no publick Cryer better heard and underſtood by all, when from an high place he makes proclamation to the people, than the rules of Wiſdom and Vertue are: which do not lie concealed, nor can be altered at our pleaſure; but preſent themſelves continually to mens thoughts whereſoever they go, being as plain as the high-way, and remaining unmoveable and fixed, notwithſtanding all the attempts that have been made to ſubvert them.

Ver. 3. *She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.*] Let their buſineſs be what it will, whether in the Courts of Judgment, or among thoſe that traffick in the City, or in their own private habitation, ſtill they know what their duty is: which their own Conſcience, as well as GOD's Miniſters, rings ſo continually in their ears; that they cannot avoid ſuch informations.

Ver. 4. *Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the ſons of men.*] Which they hear as plainly and diſtinctly, as if Wiſdom it ſelf ſhould call to them from above, ſaying; Hearken, O men, of whatſoever rank and condition you be; whether high or low, rich or poor; for my inſtructions are common to you all.

Ver. 5. *O ye ſimple ones, underſtand wiſdom; and ye fools, be ye of an underſtanding heart.*] Your fault is, that you are inconſiderate, and eaſily cheated (VII. 21, 22.) or which is worſe, ſtupidly bent to follow your ſenſual appetite; as if you had no better inclinations: But if you will attend, I will make you more circumſpect and wary; and diſpoſe you to be led by prudent counſels.

Ver. 6. *Hear, for I will ſpeak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips* ſhall be *right things.*] Do not turn away your ears, but liſten to my words; for I will teach you things moſt worthy of your notice and choice; which will conduct you ſafely in all the paſſages of your life; and lay before you ſuch a plain, direct and eaſie path, that if you walk in it you ſhall not miſs of being happy.

Ver. 7. *For my mouth ſhall ſpeak truth, and wickedneſs is an abomination to my lips.*] For I will utter nothing raſhly, or contrary to the truth; all falſhood, deceit, and whatſoever may do hurt, being ſo deteſtable to me, and ſo far from my thoughts, that the correction of ſuch wickedneſs is the aim of my diſcourſe.

Ver. 8. *All the words of my mouth* are *in righteouſneſs,* there is *nothing froward or perverſe in them.*] Every word of which is exactly conformable to the rule of Righteouſneſs; there is nothing I injoin or forbid merely to hamper and perplex you, or to abridge you of your juſt liberty; much leſs to miſguide and pervert you, in the purſuit of what is good for you.

Ver. 9. *They* are *all plain to him that underſtandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.*] But, whatſoever they may ſeem to inconſiderate and prejudiced minds, they will all manifeſtly appear equal and juſt unto him that uſes his reaſon; and approve themſelves, as I ſaid, exactly conformable to the ſtricteſt rules of Righteouſneſs, unto well-diſpoſed minds, who will be at the pains to know the difference between right and wrong, or between that which is good and that which is evil for them.

Ver. 10. *Receive my inſtruction, and not ſilver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.*] They will not think me unreaſonable, when I commend the very rebukes which I give them (though adminiſtred by ſome ſharp affliction, III. 14.) and ſet ſuch a high price upon them, as to adviſe every one to accept them rather than ſilver; and to value the knowledge of GOD, and of themſelves, and of all things elſe (which theſe corrections teach them) above the choiceſt gold.

Ver. 11. *For wiſdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be deſired, are not to be compared to it.*] For true Wiſdom is ſuch an ineſtimable Jewel, that the moſt precious Pearls are traſh to it; nor can our boundleſs fancies preſent any thing to our wiſhes, that is worthy to come in competition with it.

Ver. 12. *I wiſdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.*] For what is there comparable to a prudent Mind, which is not crafty to deceive, but ſo cautious as not to be deceived? And this I may boaſt is ſolely in my power to endow Men withal; who ever give the ſafeſt, nay, infallible Advice, and direct men to diſcreeter Reſolutions in the moſt difficult caſes, than the ſubtileſt head in the world, that conſults not with me, can invent for his Clients.

Ver. 13. *The fear of the* LORD *is to hate evil; pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate.*] And my Rules are as ſhort as they are ſure: For I teach men in the firſt place religiouſly to worſhip and ſtand in awe of the Divine Majeſty; which is but a vain pretence, I further inſtruct them, if it do not make them abominate all manner of evil, though but in deſign; more particularly, I hate that vain opinion men have of their own abilities to compaſs their deſigns, which makes them forget GOD, and deſpiſe the wholeſome advice of honeſt men; as I likewiſe do the uſe of all unlawful means, though the end be good; eſpecially lying, calumny, detraction, breach of faith, which every one muſt renounce who will have my Friendſhip.

Ver. 14. *Counſel is mine, and ſound wiſdom: I am underſtanding, I have ſtrength.*] Who am the ableſt Counſellor in all deliberations; and give men the moſt certain, ſolid and never-failing advice, for the effecting their deſires, or being contented with diſappointments: For I comprehend whatſoever is fit to be done or omitted in all undertakings; and inſpire men alſo with courage to perſiſt in good reſolutions, which are neither raſhly taken nor wrongfully purſued.

Ver. 15. *By me kings reign, and princes decree juſtice.*] Kings themſelves ſit not faſt on their Thrones, tho' placed there by GOD himſelf, unleſs they be ruled by me: the wiſeſt Senators cannot ſupport themſelves and them, but by perſwading them to enact and execute juſt and merciful Laws, for the government of their people.

Ver. 16. *By me princes rule, and nobles,* even *all the judges of the earth.*] In vain do their great Captains, or other Miniſters endeavour to defend them, but under the conduct and protection of my vertuous diſcipline: Nobles and all the Judges of the land loſe their Authority, if they do not faithfully obſerve the Rules that I preſcribe them.

Ver. 17. *I love them that love me, and thoſe that ſeek me early ſhall find me.*] Which are no leſs aimable than they are eaſily known: there needing no more to come acquainted with me, but only to love me: For they that love me are beloved of me; and as they will not fail to ſeek what they love, ſo they ſhall certainly find what they ſtudiouſly ſeek.

Ver. 18. *Riches and honour* are *with me*; yea, *durable riches and righteouſneſs.*] And together with me, they ſhall find ſuch riches and honour, as ſhall add to the greatneſs and ſplendor, and ſtability of their Kingdoms and Dignities: for not merely riches and honour are in my donation, but durable poſſeſſions; which will laſt the longer, becauſe they are not gotten either by oppreſſion, or by niggardice; for I teach men both to do juſtly and to love mercy alſo. (IV. *Dan.* 24.)

Ver. 19. *My fruit* is *better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice ſilver.*] Whereby I bring them in greater Treaſures than Gold, though never ſo maſſy, never ſo refined; a Revenue of higher value, than the pureſt and choiceſt Silver in the World.

Ver. 20. *I lead in the way of righteouſneſs, in the midſt of the paths of judgment.*] For I ſet their minds and hearts aright; and inrich them with excellent thoughts; which teach them how to uſe thoſe earthly goods, and govern themſelves with ſuch exactneſs in all their private tranſactions or publick adminiſtrations; as never to ſwerve from the ſteady rules of juſtice and equity.

Ver. 21. *That I may cauſe thoſe that love me, to inherit ſubſtance; and I will fill their treaſures.*] In order to their happy ſettlement in a ſtate of eternal peace and ſubſtantial ſatisfaction, which I confer on all thoſe that ſincerely love me and adhere unto me; whoſe Souls I will fill as full, with abundance of ineſtimable riches, as their Treaſuries are with Silver and Gold, and all other ſtores.

Ver. 22. *The* LORD *poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.*] For the LORD himſelf hath no greater riches than me, who lead men to a participation of him, and communion with him (III. 19, 20.) with whom I was ever preſent (as well as always moſt dear unto him) not only when he began to create this World, but before he made any of his Works; when as yet there was nothing but himſelf.

Ver. 23. *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*] My Sovereignty and Dominion is from everlaſting; and hath no ſuperiour to it: All antiquity comes infinitely ſhort of mine; who was before the Earth it ſelf, the common mother of all mankind. (I. *Gen.* 1.)

Ver. 24. *When* there were *no depths, I was brought forth: when* there were *no fountains abounding with water.*] When as yet there were no depths (I. *Gen.* 2.) I was conceived in the mind of GOD, long before the ſources and ſprings: whoſe excellent waters, which are of greater value than any other, owe their riſe unto me, the inexhauſted fountain of all things.

Ver. 25. *Before the mountains were ſettled; before the hills was I brought forth:*] Who had a being before the mountains, from whence thoſe waters run, were ſettled; or there was ſo much as a hillock to be ſeen in the earth.

Ver. 26. *While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt part of the duſt of the world.*] For as yet the LORD had not made the earth it ſelf (as I ſaid before, *v.*23.) much leſs adorned it, and put it into this form of lofty mountains and ſpacious plains: no, there was not ſo much as the firſt atome of this globe wherein you tread.

Ver. 27. *When he prepared the heavens, I* was *there: when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the depth:*] But why do I ſpeak of the earth alone? I was preſent when he diſpoſed the heavens into this wonderful order, wherein we behold them, as well as when he moved upon that confuſed Abyſs which they incloſed, and faſhioned the earth into a regular ſhape.

Ver. 28. *When he eſtabliſhed the clouds above: when he ſtrengthened the fountains of the deep.*] When he made the watry clouds alſo, with admirable Wiſdom, ſo firm in the air, that they ſhall not fall down altogether, but by drops upon the earth: and provided ſtrong Ciſterns for the waters pent up there; from whence they guſh out forcibly, and yet wear not away the paſſages he hath opened for them.

Ver. 29. *When he gave to the ſea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:*] When he preſcribed alſo to the Sea its limits, that the waters thereof (though they ſwell and toſs up and down) ſhall not paſs over the ſhores wherein he hath confined them: and when he ſettled the Earth ſo ſtedfaſtly, like a building upon ſure foundations, that it remains unmoveable in the place he appointed for it.

Ver. 30. *Then I was by him,* as *one brought up* with him: *and I was daily* his *delight, rejoycing always before him:*] Then was I with him, nay, very near unto him; contriving all theſe things: nor had he any higher pleaſure than me,

me, who day by day, during the Creation of the World, produced ſome lovely work or other; in which he rejoiced, to ſee how good and agreeable they were, I. *Gen.* 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.

Ver. 31. *Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights* were *with the ſons of men.*] More particularly, I diſplayed my skill in the vaſt variety of Creatures, wherewith I have beautified this Earth, wherein you dwell; which afford a moſt delightful ſpectacle unto me, and unto all wiſe obſervers: who may ſee, that above all the reſt, my principal thoughts were fixed upon the children of men (I. *Gen.* 26.) in whom I delighted exceedingly (as the LORD doth in me, *v.* 30.) beholding them made in the image of GOD, and after his Likeneſs; capable to converſe with me.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for bleſſed* are they that *keep my ways.*] Who may therefore juſtly expect (all theſe things conſidered) that you ſhould cheerfully embrace my repeated Counſels; and, as dutiful children, take the greateſt pleaſure in being obedient to them. For bleſſed, you cannot but ſee, bleſſed, beyond all expreſſion, are they who obſerve (as all other creatures do) the Laws that I have preſcribed them.

Ver. 33. *Hear inſtruction, and be wiſe, and refuſe it not.*] Hearken, I beſeech you, and yield to the voice of your own reaſon, and of GOD's holy Word and Spirit: which checks the irregular motions which you find at any time in you: and be ſo wiſe and conſiderate, as not to ſlight and reject it.

Ver. 34. *Bleſſed* is *the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors.*] But rather invite ſuch Inſtructions, by giving them thankful entertainment, and going thither where you may meet with them: For happy, more happy than can be expreſſed, is that man, who not only hearkens obediently when he is told his duty, but makes it his buſineſs to be rightly informed; neglecting no opportunity, but conſtantly and diligently attending there, where he may be taught how he ought to live; moſt earneſtly deſiring to become my diſciple, and to be governed by me.

Ver. 35. *For whoſo findeth me, findeth life, and ſhall obtain favour of the* LORD.] In which, whatſoever pains he beſtows, he ſhall not loſe his labour: For as he ſhall not fail to find what he ſeeks, ſo he ſhall find withal, that I will make his life a perpetual pleaſure to him; for I have demonſtrated that he muſt needs be beloved of the LORD, to whom I am moſt nearly ally'd, and from him he ſhall obtain his heart's deſire.

Ver. 36. *But he that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own ſoul; all they that hate me, love death.*] From whence it is manifeſt, that he who violates my laws, doth the greateſt injury unto his own Soul: and whoſoever they be that hate to be reproved for it, and can neither endure to be told of their faults, nor receive any good advice, they love to be miſerable, and wilfully bring upon themſelves utter deſtruction.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter the Wiſe Man ſeems to me to illuſtrate more fully, what he had delivered in the concluſion of the foregoing (v. 32, 34, 35.) *concerning the ſatisfaction and happineſs they might expect to find, who would attend at the gates, and ſubmit themſelves to the government of that heavenly Wiſdom; which he had deſcribed to be acquainted with all the ſecrets of the Almighty. And which he here again repreſents as a glorious Queen, the daughter of heaven, adorned with all perfections (and* [a] *therefore uſes a word of the plural number* (v. 1.) *whereby to expreſs her excellencies) living in a ſtately Palace; unto which ſhe invites all miſguided Souls, and promiſes them, if they will forſake their follies, the moſt delicious entertainment.*

[b] *Which is ſet forth under the notion of a Feaſt, whereby the holy Writers are wont to expreſs (as the apteſt reſemblance of it that can be found) the high ſatisfaction, joy and pleaſure, which the principles of Wiſdom and Vertue fill our hearts withal; when we have a true reliſh of them, that we embrace them and digeſt them, and are inlivened by them to a pious life.*

This is the ſubſtance of the Parable; every part of which is not to be minutely ſcann'd; nor ſhall I go about to ſay what is particularly meant [c] *by the* ſeven pillars *of Wiſdom's houſe (though taking her houſe for the World, the* ſeven pillars *may well be thought the* ſeven planets) *what by her* meat, *what by her* drink, *&c. but look upon them only as a deſcription of the ability of Wiſdom to impart compleat ſatisfaction unto thoſe that entertain her precepts. Which were principally taught in the* Schools of the Prophets; *whoſe buſineſs it was to inſtruct the people (as the* Scribes *did afterward) in the Law of* GOD, *and being diſperſed in ſeveral places of the Country, I have conjectured their* Schools *might be the* Houſe *here ſpoken of, where* Wiſdom *had her habitation. I cannot ſay certainly how many of them there were, much leſs that there were juſt* ſeven *principal Schools, which might be lookt upon as the main ſupporters of Religion and Vertue: but there were more than one it is evident from the ſacred Hiſtory, where in one City,* 1 Sam. *IX.* 13, 14. *we find* Samuel *ſeated (in whoſe times theſe* Schools *began to flouriſh) who no doubt had there a* College of Prophets *with him, as he had afterward, we find at* Ramah, *XIX.* 20. *and in another place called the* Hill of GOD, *where the* Philiſtines *had a Garriſon; we meet with another company of Prophets,* 1 Sam. *X.* 5, 10. *And in after-times there were* Sons of the Prophets *both at* Bethel (*where they ſeem to have been more anciently,* 1 Sam. *X.* 3.) *and at* Jericho, 2 *King. II.* 3, 5. *and at* Gilgal, *IV.* 38.

Theſe Schools *alſo were ſeated in* high places *it appears from* 1 Sam. *IX.* 2. *X.* 5, 10. [d] 2 King. *I.* 9. *(and might be one reaſon of their ſacrificing in ſuch places) which agrees exactly with what is ſaid here of Wiſdom's crying upon the* higheſt places of the city, *v.* 3. *to call all thoſe who had an appetite, to come and partake of*

of her Inſtructions. Which there was ſome hope all thoſe might do, who were merely inconſiderate and deluded (v. 4.) *though* ſcorners *(as he obſerves,* v. 7, 8. *who perhaps called the Prophets mad Men) are ſo incapable of correction, that nothing will move them to become better; and therefore ſhe paſſes them by, and leaves them to their beaſtly folly; which inclines them rather to liſten to the inticements of ſuch filthy Strumpets as he had deſcribed,* Chap. *VII.*

Againſt whom there cannot be too much caution, the Strumpet's houſe being, as St. Chryſoſtom *(Hom. 2. upon St.* Matth.) *calls it,* the very ſhop of the Devil: *and therefore the Wiſe Man again gives her Character in this Chapter,* (v. 13, 14. &c.) *and repreſents the danger of being drawn in by her; that, if it was poſſible, he might make Men ſenſible, there is nothing more inconſiſtent with wiſdom, than to give up themſelves to thoſe impure luſts, which have been the ruin of all thoſe that have been led by them.*

That is one of the profitable leſſons to be learnt from this Chapter; in which the Wiſe Man concludes his Preface *to the Book of* Proverbs. *And therefore again repeats once more* (v. 10.) *that* firſt Principle *upon which all Religion is built, wherewith he began this Preface (I. 7.)* The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wiſdom. *Which they that want will be apt to make a laughter of all good inſtructions; and it is well if they be not angry at thoſe, who are ſo kind as to reprove them. If they be, it is beſt to let them alone, and not caſt pearls before ſwine; as our Saviour teaches,* [e] *agreeable to the Doctrine of the Wiſe Man,* v. 7, 8, 9. *of this Chapter.*

Where the Lord Bacon *(L. VIII. Advanc. of Learning, C. 2. Parab. 9.) is very curious, and diſtinguiſhes between a* ſcorner *and a* wicked man *(mentioned* v. 7.) *and between* ſhame *or reproach, and a* blot; *and conſequently between* reproof *given to the one and* rebuke *to the other.* For a *ſcorner,* ſaith he, only makes us loſe our labour; but the other repays us with a ſtain and diſhonour. When a man inſtructs a ſcorner, his time indeed which he thus imploys is thrown away, and others deride his pains, as a labour ill placed; and the ſcorner himſelf alſo deſpiſeth the knowledge which he is taught. *Thus a man is put to ſhame.* But the matter is tranſacted with greater danger in the reprehenſion of the other, becauſe *a wicked nature,* not only gives no ear to advice, but turns head againſt his *Reprehender,* now made odious to him; whom he either wounds preſently with contumelies before his face, or traduces afterwards to others behind his back.

But I have not been thus nice in my Paraphraſe, *becauſe it is the manner, I obſerve, of the Wiſe Man to repeat the ſame thing, in the ſame Verſe, in other words, throughout all this Book; and a* ſcorner *ſignifies the worſt of Men.*

[f] *In the* ninth *Verſe alſo the ſame great perſon, following the* Vulgar, *and reading the words thus,* give occaſion to a wiſe man, and his wiſdom will be increaſed, *makes this witty obſervation (in the ſame Chap. Parab. XXXII.) that* "occaſion *when it is offered, ſhews* the difference "between Wiſdom that is ripened into habit, "and that which ſwims only in the brain and "conceit, or is boaſted in ſpeech, but hath "not taken deep root. *For the former upon* "occaſion *preſented, whereby it may be exer-* "*ciſed, is inſtantly quickned, addreſſes it ſelf to* "*the buſineſs, and is ſo inlarged and dilated,* "*that it ſeems greater than it ſelf: but the o-* "*ther, which, before occaſion, was brisk and* "*buſie, now occaſion is given becomes amazed* "*and confuſed; So that even he who preſumed* "*himſelf poſſeſſed of it, begins to be in doubt* "*whether his pre-conceptions of* ſuch wiſdom, "*were not mere dreams, and empty ſpeculations.*

But there being no ſuch word as occaſion *in the Original, and the word* give *ſeeming to me rather to referr to what the Wiſe Man is ſpeaking of, viz.* reproof *or* inſtruction, *I have waved this obſervation; which will do well alone, but not be connected with the Diſcourſe; which is my deſign to repreſent. And here note this as a mark of a hopeful perſon, that is likely to become wiſe, if he be not galled with reproof; at which fools are wont to kick. This is a Truth to be conſidered moſt ſeriouſly, by which every man may take a meaſure of himſelf, whether he be likely to come to good or no.* If he cannot endure to be told of his faults, it is a ſhrewd ſign he is in the way to be undone; and hath not as yet ſo much as approached to the gates of Wiſdom.

Which admoniſhes us here of another great fault of mankind, [g] who are moſt eager after that, which is prohibited to them. *An obſervation which is as true of their fondneſs and readineſs to embrace heretical Doctrines (to which the* Fathers *apply,* v. 17.) *if they be preached in a corner, and made a great ſecret; as of their appetite after thoſe pleaſures, from which they are reſtrained, and cannot have with publick approbation.*

1. *WIſdom hath builded her houſe, ſhe hath hewen out her ſeven pillars.*] Do not imagine that I commend unto you ſome meaner piece of knowledge or skill, but the moſt abſolute and accompliſhed Wiſdom; whoſe worth and dignity is inexpreſſible: For as this great world I told you (VIII. 26, 27, *&c.*) was built by Wiſdom in moſt excellent order and perfect beauty; ſo from every part of it we may learn what regard we ought to have to her holy precepts; which are taught every where, but eſpecially in the Schools of the Prophets. *See* Arg. [*a*] [*b*] [*c*].

Ver. 2. *She hath killed her beaſts, ſhe hath mingled her wine; ſhe hath alſo furniſhed her table.*] There, above all other places, a moſt plentiful proviſion is made for all hungry and thirſty ſouls (that are deſirous to know what is good for themſelves (who ſhall find no leſs life, and vigour, and ſtrength, and joy communicated to them from her ſacred Inſtructions, than the body doth when it partakes of a liberal and moſt delicious Feaſt.

Ver. 3. *She hath ſent forth her maidens, ſhe crieth upon the higheſt places of the city.*] For nothing is wanting there, but only Gueſts to accept of her entertainment; unto which her Attendants and Miniſters (perſons of uncorrupted purity and ſincerity) are ſent to invite you, with a loud voice and earneſt entreaties; which cannot but be heard by whole cities and countries; unto whom the dwelling-places of wiſdom,

and

and the food of ſouls lie openly expoſed. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 4. *Whoſo is ſimple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth underſtanding, ſhe ſaith to him,*] There is no man ſo ſilly but he may be welcome to it; or rather all ſuch perſons are deſired to bethink themſelves, how inconſiderately they have been ſeduced, and to forbear the proſecution of their fooliſh deſires ſo long, as to take advice of her. Let a man be never ſo much beſotted with vice and wickedneſs, ſhe doth not reject him, nor deſpair of him; if he will but hearken, when ſhe makes this gracious motion to the whole knot of them;

Ver. 5. *Come, eat my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.*] Draw near, conſider, and lay to heart, the wholſome Inſtructions which I propound to you; credit me ſo far as to relie upon the promiſe which I make you of the higheſt comfort, pleaſure, and ſatisfaction, in embracing and obeying my precepts.

Ver. 6. *Forſake the fooliſh, and live; and go in the way of underſtanding.*] Do but make a trial, by forſaking all ill company, and thoſe childiſh deſires, and ſenſeleſs courſes of which you can give no account to your ſelves; and immediately you ſhall have a taſte of happineſs, which will invite you to perfect it, by following hereafter the deliberate dictates of ſober reaſon, and the grave counſels of prudent perſons, who have diſcerning minds, and practice themſelves what they commend to others.

Ver. 7. *He that reproveth a ſcorner, getteth to himſelf ſhame: and he that rebuketh a wicked* man, getteth *himſelf a blot.*] As for thoſe that deride Religion, and ſcoff at all good admonitions, it is in vain to meddle with them; for reproofs are fitteſt for ſuch perſons; and he who performs that charitable office, not only loſes his labour, but is like to be requited with reproaches: whoſoever he be that rebukes one of thoſe impious wretches, hath commonly all the dirt thrown upon him, that their malice can rake together. *See* Arg. [*d*] [*e*].

Ver. 8. *Reprove not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee: rebuke a wiſe* man, *and he will love thee.*] Therefore men of that wicked temper Wiſdom doth not invite to her inſtructions, nor require her Miniſters to call upon them; but rather to paſs them by, when they find by experience that they can do no good to ſuch perſons, but only draw their hatred upon themſelves: from ſuch it is wiſdom to turn away, and beſtow reproofs upon thoſe who have ſo much underſtanding, as to ſee God's Miniſters intend their good, and accordingly thank them for it, and give them opportunity to do them further ſervice.

Ver. 9. *Give* inſtruction *to a wiſe* man, *and he will be yet wiſer: teach a juſt* man, *and he will increaſe in learning.*] For this is an undoubted Maxim, that a man diſpoſed to learn will grow wiſer even by Reprehenſion; and the Inſtructions given to a man inclined to goodneſs, will make him better, and much improve him, not only in knowledge but in the practice of vertue, (whereas a ſcorner grows worſe by endeavours to reform him, and is only made more uncapable of good advice, by being exaſperated and inraged at it.) *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 10. *The fear of the* LORD *is the beginning of wiſdom: and the knowledge of the holy is underſtanding.*] And the very firſt, and indeed the principal thing that is to be inſtilled into all mens minds, without which they will learn nothing elſe, is a Religious ſenſe of the Divine Majeſty, and an awful regard towards him (as I have obſerved already more than once, I. 7. II. 5. VIII. 13. but it cannot be too oft repeated.) And next to this, that no knowledge deſerves the Name of *Underſtanding*, but that which is delivered by the Holy Men of God, and diſpoſes us to devote our ſelves unto him in holy obedience.

Ver. 11. *For by me thy days ſhall be multiplied, and the years of thy life ſhall be increaſed.*] Other knowledge may make thee ſubtil and cunning in thy worldly affairs, but this alone can make thee happy: And will certainly both prolong thy life (as I have frequently ſaid, III. 2, 16. IV. 10, 13, *&c.*) and lengthen it in health, peace, proſperity and pleaſure.

Ver. 12. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf: but* if *thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear* it.] This is the true reaſon I invite thee ſo earneſtly to imbibe my Doctrine, (*v.* 5.) not for my own ſake, but for thine; who alone wilt either reap the profit of being truly vertuous; or ſuffer all the harm and miſchief (which will not in the leaſt redound to me) of thy prophane ſcoffs and jeers at Religion and Goodneſs.

Ver. 13. ¶ *A fooliſh woman* is *clamorous*; ſhe is *ſimple, and knoweth nothing.*] ¶ Unto which prophaneneſs as there wants not temptations, ſo there is none more dangerous, I think, which makes me mention it ſo often (II. 16. V. 3. VI. 24. VII. 10, 11, *&c.*) than the lewd and impious Adultereſs; who is no leſs bold and importunate, than ſhe is bewitching and powerful to beſot the minds of her ſtupid lovers; but perfectly ignorant of GOD and Religion, and a ſtranger to all the principles of vertue.

Ver. 14. *For ſhe ſitteth at the door of her houſe, on a ſeat in the high places of the city.*] Which ſhe openly oppoſes, for (as if ſhe would put a manifeſt affront upon them) in that very place where the Miniſters of Wiſdom call men to learn the fear of the LORD (*v.* 3, 10.) ſhe ſits in ſtate at the door of her houſe, to divert their minds from all ſuch thoughts, and drown them in ſenſual pleaſures.

Ver. 15. *To call paſſengers who go right on their ways.*] That's the very buſineſs of her life, to defeat all good deſigns; by drawing even thoſe aſide into her chambers of impurity, who were going ſtreight forward to the ſchools of wiſdom and goodneſs.

Ver. 16. *Whoſo is ſimple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth underſtanding, ſhe ſaith to him,*] Whoſe words (*v.* 4.) ſhe no leſs impudently than prophanely returns, and tells them, It is not ſhe, but wiſdom and vertue that makes men fools; by confining their deſires, and denying them the liberties which ſhe invites them to come and enjoy in her embraces: where their dulneſs ſhall learn this unknown ſecret.

Ver. 17. *Stolen waters are ſweet, and bread* eaten *in ſecret is pleaſant.*] That there are no pleaſures comparable to thoſe, which a man gets by ſtealth from them to whom they properly belong: no morſel ſo ſweet, as that which is forbidden; but, having been long deſired,

he finds at last a private opportunity, to taste of without danger. *See* Arg. [g].

Ver. 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there*; and that *her guests* are *in the depths of hell.*] But the poor deluded wretch considers not all this while (which I have often already represented, II. 18. V. 5. VII. 27. and is all that I shall oppose to those sinful inticements) that she invites him to his utter ruin both of Soul and Body. (*See* II. 18.) and sinks all those down, who accept of her invitation, to the very bottom of that pit, where the old Giants are, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the earth, VI. *Gen.* 4, 5, 11.

CHAP. X.

The Proverbs of Solomon.

ARGUMENT.

Here now properly begins the Book *of the Proverbs (as the Title of this Chapter tells us) what hath been delivered hitherto, being rather a* Preface, *to awaken attention, and from sundry arguments to commend the wise Instructions, which now follow, to every one's practice; and to caution those, who would receive benefit by these Instructions, from such things as may hinder their edification in the School of Wisdom.*

Whose Lessons, in this first part *of the Book, (which reaches to the 17th Verse of the XXII. Chapter) are delivered in short Sentences; every Verse being a Lesson by it self; which commonly hath no connexion with that which goes before and follows after: or if there be any, it is not so clear as to be easily made out. And these Lessons are for the most part delivered, either by way of* Antithesis, *i. e. comparing opposites one with another; the wise, for instance, and the foolish, the diligent and the sluggish, the rich and the poor; and, in general vertue and vice, assigning to each their proper rewards and punishments: or they are mere* Parables, *that is, similitudes; in which one thing is compared to another that resembles it.*

And he intending to instruct all sorts of men in their several kinds of life, these Lessons are very various; and do not merely inform them about their manners, *but about the* events *also, which are wont (either frequently or sometimes) to accompany or follow such and such estates, offices, and actions of humane life. And some are directions for single persons; others for the ordering of houshold affairs; and others for the government of kingdoms. In short, some are divine Precepts; others civil Advertisements for the management of our selves in several passages of humane life: to the observance of which he excites the Reader sometimes by promises, sometimes by threatnings.*

It is not to be expected that in a Paraphrase, I should preserve the smartness that is in many of these Sentences: And it will be hard to abridge, as I have done hitherto, the Contents of each Chapter. Yet, I shall attempt something in it: And though I cannot say there is an order observed in them all (they being only a Collection of wise Observations and Aphorisms, in which, Method is wont to be neglected by other Authors) yet the first *Sentence of this Chapter seems not to have been casually,* [a] *but designedly set in the front of the rest. Because nothing contributes so much every way to the happiness of mankind, as a Religious care about the Education of Children. Which Parents are here admonished to attend, if they desire their Children should not prove a grief and shame to them; and Children are put in mind of the Obedience they owe to their Instructions, that they may be a joy to their Parents.*

The Lord Bacon *(in his* Advancement of Learning, *L. VIII. C. 2. Parab. VII.) thinks that the* gladness *and heaviness, which are in* Fathers *and* Mothers, *according as their Children prove good or bad, are here so accurately distinguished by* Solomon; " *that he would repre-*
" *sent a wise and well-governed Son, to be chiefly*
" a comfort to the Father, *who knows the*
" *value of wisdom and vertue better than the*
" Mother, *(which account the* Hebrews *also*
" *give of this matter) and therefore rejoices more*
" *at the towardliness of his Son; which he not*
" *only better understands, but hath taken per-*
" *haps so much more care about his Education,*
" *that the good fruits of it give* him *a greater*
" *joy than they can do to the* Mother. *Who*
" *on the other side is* more grieved and dis-
" comforted *at the calamity of a Son; both be-*
" *cause the affection of a Mother is more soft and*
" *tender, and perchance is conscious to her self,*
" *that by too much indulgence she hath tainted*
" *and corrupted his tender years* ". *She is more at home also (it may be added) and therefore, having her Son's folly more in her eye, hath a greater share in the grief that it causes.*

But this is not to be too much pressed, I think, for both of them have such a share either in the joy *or in the* sorrow, *that it is as hard to distinguish between them constantly, as it is to make a difference between the joy and grief for the well or ill doing of a* Son, *and the well or ill doing of a* Daughter: *which may be, and oft-times are, equal. And therefore I have but just touched upon this in my Paraphrase of the* first *verse. Concerning which I shall note this further, that whether these Instructions were written with a peculiar respect to the education of* Solomon's *own Son, or indifferently for all, it was most judiciously done to begin with such as this first part chiefly consists of; there being so great a necessity (as the forenamed Writer observes in his VIIth Book, Chap. 3.)* " *that men drink*
" *deeply all* pious *and* moral *knowledge before*
" *they taste of* politick, *that* they who are
" bred up in the Courts of Princes, and in
" affairs of State from tender years, rarely
" attain to inward and sincere probity of
" manners. For not being seasoned with
" Religion and the Doctrine of manners, and
" offices of life, their judgments are cor-
" rupted and made to think, that there are
" no true and solid moral differences of things,
" but all things are to be measured by utili-
" ty and success. " *And in this false opinion they are the more immoveably settled, if to ill education, there be added the fewel of bad Books: which all those will reject with disdain, who shall be so happy as to make this Book their early study.*

In

In which there follow here immediately (and very properly) ſome Inſtructions about getting riches, and about the keeping and uſing them aright (v. 2, 3, &c.) *that a curſe may not be intailed upon them, and deſcend with them unto our children. And then,* v. 7. *a memorable obſervation is annexed,* [b] *(which* Plato, *as* Euſebius *obſerves, tranſlated into his VIIth Book of* Laws) *concerning the fame of good and bad men after they are dead. About which the ſame great man before named (the Lord* Bacon) *hath this Note in the ſame VIIIth Book, Parab.* 8. *That* the name of good men after Envy is extinguiſht (which cropt the bloſſom of their Fame, while they were alive) preſently ſhoots up and flouriſheth; and their Praiſes daily increaſe in ſtrength and vigour: *But for wicked men,* though their fame thro' the partial favour of Friends, and of men of their own faction, may laſt for a little time, a deteſtation of their name ſprings up not long after; and at laſt thoſe vaniſhing praiſes end in infamy, and like bodies that putrifie, expire in a filthy and noiſome odour. *And thus the LXX. in this place inſtead of the* memory of the juſt is bleſſed, *or* is with bleſſing *or* benediction, *have theſe words,* the memory of the juſt is with encomiums *or* praiſes: *which is the true explication of the phraſe. And accordingly the Church commemorates the Saints of* God, *recounting their worthy deeds, and praiſing him for them. Of which ſee Mr.* Mede, *Diſcourſe XXII.*

The reſt of the Chapter conſiſts of mixt obſervations, concerning the difference between wiſe *men and* fools, idle perſons *and* diligent, ill-natured *people and thoſe who are* candid and kind *(v. 12.) and eſpecially between the vices and vertues of the tongue, and their rewards and puniſhments,* v. 13, 14, &c. *And one remarkable obſervation is inſerted,* v. 22. *which belongs to* [c] *that head of diligence and laboriouſneſs: upon which, he remembers us, no man is ſo to depend, as to imagine to obtain what he would have by that alone; but to look up to* God *as the donor of all good things, and giving ſucceſs to our induſtry. Which was a thing little thought of by heathens, who were too prone to imagine all things requiſite unto happineſs, to be placed in themſelves. But the Scriptures every where inculcate this, that it is* God *who gives wiſdom to the wiſe, and victory to the valiant, and riches to the diligent, and good ſucceſs to the prudent and potent,* &c.

[d] *Unto which add that obſervation alſo,* v. 24. *which may be further improved than is expreſſed in the Paraphraſe, to this ſenſe;* that wicked men many times draw upon themſelves that which they feared, by thoſe very means whereby they ſtudy to avoid them. *An Example of which (as* Bochartus *obſerves in his* Phaleg. *L. I. c.* 16. *Part* 1.) *we have in thoſe that built the Tower of* Babel: *who for fear of diſperſion deſigned to build a City and a Tower, ſaying,* Go to, let us build, *&c.* leſt we be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth, *XI.* Gen. 4. *But* God *ſo ordered it that this very attempt was the occaſion of their diſperſion, and brought what they feared ſooner upon them,* atque ipſum mali remedium illis ceſſit in periculum: *the very remedy of the evil they would have avoided, leading them directly into it.*

R. Levi *hath an obſervation that the precepts of Wiſdom from the beginning of this Chapter to the* 10*th verſe of the XVIIIth are in a manner all concerning the danger of ſeveral ſorts of vice and wickedneſs; and afterward they are all concerning other ſubjects. Which, how true it is, I ſhall there conſider.*

1. *THE proverbs of Solomon. A wiſe ſon maketh a glad father; but a fooliſh ſon is the heavineſs of his mother.*] Let the Father's care in educating his children (eſpecially his Son the Heir of his Family) be equal to the joy he will have in their well-doing: and let the Mother beware that her indulgence do not ſpoil them; for ſhe will have the greateſt ſhare in the heavineſs, which their untowardneſs will give them. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Treaſures of wickedneſs profit nothing: but righteouſneſs delivereth from death.*] This is more neceſſary than the care of heaping up riches for them (which many times tempt men to fraud and oppreſſion) for though great treaſures be gotten by ſuch means, they will be ſo far from availing the owners in time of diſtreſs, that they will rather expoſe them to be a prey; when juſtice and mercy with a little wealth, will procure ſafety and deliverance from the greateſt dangers.

Ver. 3. *The* Lord *will not ſuffer the ſoul of the righteous to famiſh: but he caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked.*] The reaſon is, the Lord hath Treaſures in ſtore for the juſt, eſpecially for the merciful man; and will ſend him ſuch ſupplies in his ſtraits, that he ſhall not ſtarve, but rather have enough: But he will drive the wicked out of their ill gotten poſſeſſions, whereby they think to ſecure themſelves from want.

Ver. 4. *He becometh poor that dealeth* with *a ſlack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*] And next unto Vertue let Children be bred up to Induſtry; without which indeed they cannot be vertuous; for both poverty and fraud are commonly the fruit of negligence and ſloth; when an active diligence is wont to inrich men, without the help of deceit.

Ver. 5. *He that gathereth in ſummer* is *a wiſe ſon:* but *he that ſleepeth in harveſt is a ſon that cauſeth ſhame.*] Eſpecially if prudence be added to diligence, and opportunity be not neglected: For as he that makes Hay (as we ſpeak) while the Sun ſhines, is commended for his provident care; ſo he that by taking his eaſe, when he ſhould gather the fruits of the earth, loſes all the benefit of his former labours, is a ſhame to himſelf, and unto thoſe that bred him.

Ver. 6. *Bleſſings* are *upon the head of the juſt: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*] The bleſſings of heaven ſhall viſibly deſcend in great plenty, upon the juſt and merciful man; but their own iniquity ſhall violently overwhelm thoſe, to their utter confuſion, who wickedly defraud and oppreſs their neighbour.

Ver. 7. *The memory of the juſt* is *bleſſed: but the name of the wicked ſhall rot.*] And tho' Envy may ſometime cloud a good man for the preſent, yet

yet after death an honourable mention ſhall be made of him; and he ſhall be commemorated with praiſes: when the memory of the wicked, who now perhaps are extolled, ſhall either periſh or ſtink and be abominated. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 8. *The wiſe in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool ſhall fall.*] He that is truly wiſe, will thankfully receive ſuch good advices as theſe, and avoid the dangers of which he is admoniſhed: But he whoſe wiſdom lies only in his tongue (which moves upon all occaſions, and will not let him learn of others) ruins himſelf, even by his own imprudent prating.

Ver. 9. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely: but he that perverteth his ways, ſhall be known.*] He that deals ſincerely in all his actions is both ſafe and ſure; but he that relies upon fraud and tricks of deceiving ſhall find his cunning fail him at the laſt; and beſides, can never be ſecure that he ſhall not be detected and made a publick reproach.

Ver. 10. *He that winketh with the eye, cauſeth ſorrow: but a prating fool ſhall fall.*] But he eſpecially, that under pretence of kindneſs betrays his neighbour, and gives the ſign to others, when he would have them circumvent him, is a common grievance; and ſhall himſelf, in the end, feel the miſerable effects of his falſeneſs: for he is worſe than a man, who openly profeſſing his malice rails perpetually, and thereby, ſooner hurts himſelf than others.

Ver. 11. *The mouth of a righteous* man is *a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*] The diſcourſe of a good man (like a perpetual ſpring of wholſome water) always tends to the profit, comfort, and refreſhment of thoſe that receive it: but a wicked man, how fair ſoever his language be, doth but conceal the miſchief, which (like peſtilent waters out of a deep pit) he deſigns to produce when opportunity ſerves.

Ver. 12. *Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrifes: but love covereth all ſins.*] Such is the difference between hatred and love, that where all things are in quiet, *hatred* raiſes up diſturbance, and makes men quarrel about trifles; when *love* pacifies the minds of thoſe that it finds provoked by real offences, and compoſes all thoſe contentions, for which there was too much occaſion.

Ver. 13. *In the lips of him that hath underſtanding, wiſdom is found: but a rod* is *for the back of him that is void of underſtanding.*] He that would be wiſe muſt ſeek the acquaintance of ſome intelligent perſon: but the moſt knowing perſon in the world cannot make him wiſe that is void of conſideration; who will never learn, unleſs perhaps by ſome great affliction.

Ver. 14. *Wiſe* men *lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the fooliſh is near deſtruction.*] Wiſe men treaſure up knowledge, and reſerve it till a fitting opportunity to make uſe of it: but a fool is always talking, and ſeldom opens his mouth but it proves a preſent miſchief to himſelf or others.

Ver. 15. *The rich man's wealth* is *his ſtrong city: the deſtruction of the poor* is *their poverty.*] Riches are a powerful defence to their owners againſt a great many evils, to which we are ſubject in this life; and naturally raiſe mens minds, and make them confident: whereas poverty expoſes men to injuries and abuſes; and is apt to depreſs and deject their ſpirits.

Ver. 16. *The labour of the righteous* tendeth *to life; the fruit of the wicked to ſin.*] Which is a great motive to an honeſt diligence; but then remember this, that the end of a vertuous man's labours, after riches, is only that he may provide himſelf the neceſſaries of life, and that he may do good with them; but the great revenues, which perhaps are left to a wicked man by his anceſtors, without any pains of his own, are imployed to ſatisfie his ſinful luſts and paſſions.

Ver. 17. *He* is *in the way of life that keepeth inſtruction: but he that refuſeth reproof, erreth.*] He that carefully obſerves, and puts men in mind of theſe wholſome admonitions, which may teach them to correct and amend their lives, is in the way to make himſelf and others happy: but he that leaves off to give reproof incourages men in their errors; from which, he who ſhuns thoſe that are wont to reprehend him, is never like to be reclaimed.

Ver. 18. *He that hideth hatred* with *lying lips, and he that uttereth ſlander, is a fool.*] He that diſſembleth his hatred, by great profeſſions of Friendſhip before one's face, and then goes and vents it in ſlanders behind his back, may ſeem a cunning man; but is really an impious fool.

Ver. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin: but he that refraineth his lips,* is *wiſe.*] Nor are calumny and flattery the only vices of the tongue; but much ſpeaking is rarely innocent: therefore he that is ſparing of his words, and conſiders well both when, and where, and what he ſpeaks, is a truly prudent perſon.

Ver. 20. *The tongue of the juſt* is as *choice ſilver; the heart of the wicked* is *little worth.*] The words of ſuch a man are exceeding valuable; becauſe they are both ſolid and ſincere; but let wicked men deviſe and ſtudy what they pleaſe, it will be good for little, or rather very miſchievous.

Ver. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wiſdom.*] Many are preſerved from periſhing by the diſcourſes of a good man: But a fool, for want of conſideration, receives no benefit by them, and doth not ſo much as take care to ſave himſelf.

Ver. 22. *The bleſſing of the* LORD, *it maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it.*] It is not merely mens induſtry and provident care, to which they owe their riches; but the bleſſing of GOD proſpering rheir endeavours; which when he favours, wealth flows in apace upon them; and is enjoyed alſo without anxious thoughts and labours. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 23. It is *as a ſport to a fool to do miſchief: but a man of underſtanding hath wiſdom.*] A ſenſeleſs ſinner makes a jeſt of the moſt horrid impieties that can be committed by himſelf, or others: but a man that weighs things wiſely, conſiders that this is no laughing matter; and takes that pleaſure in doing well, which fools take in miſchievous wickedneſs.

Ver. 24. *The fear of the wicked, it ſhall come upon him; but the deſire of the righteous ſhall be granted.*] Yet there is none ſo wicked but he is ſometime afraid; and ſince this will not amend him,

him, he shall feel what he fears: but this is the comfort of righteous men, who have reason to hope, that they shall at length obtain their desires. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 25. *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no* more: *but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.*] Though the wicked, like a whirlwind, may bluster terribly, and overthrow all that stands in his way, yet he quickly vanishes, and destroys himself by his own violence: but the righteous, as he is fixt and settled in his vertue, which is peaceable and quiet, and makes no disturbance; so he enjoys the solid fruits of it, in a durable, and immoveable felicity.

Ver. 26. *As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.*] Vinegar is not more offensive to the teeth, nor smoke more vexatious to the eyes, than a remiss and negligent minister is to him that imploys him, and relies upon him in a weighty business.

Ver. 27. *The fear of the* LORD *prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortned.*] The best way to prolong life, is religiously to observe the Laws of GOD: but wickedness generally (both by its own nature and by GOD's righteous judgment) brings men to an untimely end.

Ver. 28. *The hope of the righteous* shall be *gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.*] And what a lementable case is a wicked man in, when he finds himself unexpectedly undone? for this is another difference between a good man and a bad; that the hope of the former concludes in a joyful possession of what he waits for: but the other, failing of his expectation, ends his days in sadness and sorrow.

Ver. 29. *The way of the* LORD *is strength to the upright: but destruction* shall be *to the workers of iniquity.*] Whence it follows also, that a faithful observance of the rules of vertue, which the LORD hath prescribed us, inspires the upright man with great courage and undaunted resolution, when any evil threatens him: but the workers of iniquity being weak and feeble-spirited, are terribly shaken, nay, broken with the fear of that destruction which is coming on them.

Ver. 30. *The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.*] There is no way like Piety, Justice, and Mercy, to establish a family in perpetual prosperity; but the wicked (how successful soever they may be for a time) shall not be able to settle themselves and their posterity, in the good land, which GOD hath given us.

Ver. 31. *The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.*] The very discourse of a righteous man is so profitable to instruct others in Wisdom and Goodness, that it shall be a means to perpetuate him, like a fruitful tree in a flourishing condition: but he that uses his tongue perversly, to abuse, cozen, or raise dissentions among his neighbours, shall be cut down, like a tree that cumbers the ground.

Ver. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable; but the mouth of the wicked* speaketh *frowardness.*] The righteous knows very well, how to speak those things (and accustoms his mouth unto them) which are grateful to men, and yet not displeasing to Almighty GOD: but the wicked are odious to both, because they are skilled altogether in lying and flattery, fraud and caluminy, and such like subtle, but detestible, arts of doing mischief.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter consists of many promiscuous observations, concerning such things as will make men happy or miserable. It begins with an admonition concerning Justice *in our dealings one with another; without which Society (which* GOD *designs and takes a special care to uphold) cannot be preserved. And mankind being very apt to be regardless what they do, towards* GOD *or towards man, when they grow rich and great; he next gives a caution against* Pride *and* Insolence, *as a certain forerunner of ruin. For it consisting in forgetfulness of* GOD, *confidence in mens selves, despising others, slighting good counsels, and attempting things out of the bounds of mens place and calling (all which proceed from stupid folly) naturally leads men headlong into destruction.*

Then he commends sincerity *and* charity (v. 3, 4.) *and represents the vast difference between Vertue and Wickedness, in order to mens private safety* (v. 5, 6, &c.) *and to the publick security* (v. 10, 11.) *After which follow a great many prudent observations and advices, for mens private, and for the common good; with such remarks upon sundry vertues and vices, as are sufficient to invite to the one, and deterr from the other.*

[a] *Among the rest there is one,* v. 21. (*translated thus by us,* though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished) *upon which there are as many glosses almost, as there are Interpreters. But I have only put together those two senses of the* former *part of the verse, which are most agreeable to the* latter; *and do not think fit to trouble the Reader with the other, any further than merely to inform him of this one thing. That most Interpreters by* hand in hand *understand the hands of divers persons: but some few take it for the hands of one and the same person, who puts one hand into the other. And these last named, make the sense one of these two ways: either that though a sinner endeavour to hide his sin (as a man doth a thing which he holds in one hand and covers with the other) he shall notwithstanding be found out and suffer for it; or that, though wicked men do nothing, but like an idle person have their hands folded one in the other, yet they are not free from sin; which they are devising in their mind, and will draw a just vengeance upon them.*

[b] *In the next verse I have followed* Bochartus (de Animal. S. *Part I. L. II. C.* 47.) *in his translation of those two words* מרח מאיש *which he renders,* her mind departed, *viz. from the love of her husband: but I have not neglected the other sense of which I think those words are capable.*

[c] *In the 29th verſe I have adhered to the opinion of the Lord* Bacon *(Book VIII. of the* Advanc. of Learning, *Ch.* 2. *Parab.* 9.) " *who takes* " *it for a profitable admonition touching diſcords* " *in families and domeſtick breaches (but may* " *as well be applied to whole kingdoms, which* " *are larger families) which whoſoever cheriſhes* " *among his children or ſervants (or people)* " *as a means to have his affairs better admini-* " *ſtred, when they have an evil eye upon, and* " *hate one another; commonly finds his hopes* " *turn into wind. For thoſe alterations and* " *changes, for the moſt part, ſucceed ill: and* " *thoſe diſturbers of their own families often-* " *times meet with vexations and ingratitudes* " *from thoſe very perſons, whom (paſſing by* " *others) they adopt as the objects of their ſpeci-* " *al favour: Nay, by this means they draw* " *upon themſelves ill reports and doubtful ru-* " *mours; for it is not ill obſerved by* Cicero, " That all reports, both good and bad fame, " comes from domeſticks. *Which two evils* " *(he thinks)* Solomon *expreſſes by* inheriting " the wind: *for the* fruſtrating of expectati- " ons *and* raiſing of rumours *are rightly com-* " *pared unto* winds. " *I have added in the Paraphraſe two other things belonging to wind; which* makes a great noiſe, *and* leaves nothing behind it: *for all make it an emblem of* emptineſs.

[d] *The laſt verſe is a wiſe conſideration ſuggeſted to good men, when they are under the oppreſſions of the wicked: that if the juſt be afflicted (as* Melanchthon *gloſſes) who ſeriouſly endeavour amendment of life,* God *will take a time to reckon with thoſe lewd men, who contumaciouſly and furiouſly perſiſt in their wickedneſs. So the wiſe man (ſays he) admoniſhes us of* two *things.* Firſt, *that the Church is ſubject to the Croſs, which the cruelty of Tyrants may lay upon it: but* ſecondly, *thoſe Tyrants muſt one day anſwer for their cruelty by ſharp puniſhments upon themſelves; Nay, though they flouriſh for ſome time, at laſt, ſays he, they are ſhaken out of their empires. Hither he applies thoſe known words of the Poet,* Ad generum Cereris ſine cæde, *&c.*

1. *A falſe balance* is *abomination to the* Lord: *but a juſt weight* is *his delight.*] It is not ſo ſmall a ſin as men imagine, to cheat their neighbour (tho' it be only in a little matter) but extremely hateful and deteſtable to the great Lord and Governor of the world: as on the other ſide, exactly juſt and equal dealing in all our commerce one with another, is highly pleaſing to him.

Ver. 2. When *pride cometh, then cometh ſhame: but with the lowly* is *wiſdom.*] Do not entertain an haughty conceit of thy ſelf, nor inſult over others; for the folly of this appears, in drawing along with it that contempt and diſgrace, which above all things ſuch men would avoid: therefore be humble and modeſt; the wiſdom of which is manifeſt, from the univerſal reſpect which it gains every where.

Ver. 3. *The integrity of the upright ſhall guide them: but the perverſeneſs of tranſgreſſors ſhall deſtroy them.*] The integrity of thoſe that uprightly obſerve the rules of vertue, is their higheſt prudence, and ſafeſt guide, through all manner of difficulties and dangers: but the crafty wileneſs of perfidious men, who will be tied unto no Laws, is mere folly; and ſhall be ſo far from preſerving them, that it ſhall prove their certain deſtruction.

Ver. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteouſneſs delivereth from death.*] Heaps of wealth, amaſſed by extortion or covetouſneſs, ſhall as little avail, as ſubtilty and cunning, when God in his righteous diſpleaſure ſhall puniſh the world by a common calamity: But Juſtice, accompanied with Mercy (as hath been obſerved already, X. 2.) will befriend him that hath conſtantly practiſed them, and reſcue him even when there is no hope of ſafety. [*See* XXIX. *Eccluſ.* 11, 12, 13. and XL. 24.]

Ver. 5. *The righteouſneſs of the perfect ſhall direct his way: but the wicked ſhall fall by his own wickedneſs.*] Remember this (and be not nauſeated at the repetition of it, for it is a weighty Truth) that there is no ſurer guide to direct men in the plain way to ſafety, or any other good, than a ſincere and impartial obſervance of all God's Laws: but that the wicked ſhall periſh, by thoſe very impious courſes (of lyes, ſuppoſe, breach of promiſes, perjuries, and oppreſſion) whereby they think to greaten or to ſecure themſelves.

Ver. 6. *The righteouſneſs of the upright ſhall deliver them: but tranſgreſſors ſhall be taken in* their own *naughtineſs.*] Remember it, I ſay, (for it cannot be too often inculcated) that the vertue of unfeignedly and intirely upright men, ſhall be their preſervative when they are in danger: but they that are governed wholly by their own depraved deſires and intereſts, ſhall be intangled and inevitably periſh in their own naughty contrivances.

Ver. 7. *When a wicked man dieth,* his *expectation ſhall periſh: and the hope of unjuſt* men *periſheth.*] Do not imagine therefore that they have the advantage of others, who are looſe from all Laws. They may ſeem ſo to have for the preſent: but, beſide what I have now ſaid, it muſt be conſidered that Death (and how ſuddenly doth that ſometime overtake them) utterly deſtroys all their projects and hopes: whatſoever they expected to accompliſh by their riches, or their power, or their friends, it periſheth together with them.

Ver. 8. *The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his ſtead.*] Nay, before that, it is frequently ſeen, that a juſt man is unexpectly drawn out of thoſe ſtraits and difficulties wherein he was perplexed, and the wicked (who perhaps brought him into them) takes the place which he hath left; falling into thoſe very diſtreſſes, from which the juſt is happily freed.

Ver. 9. *An hypocrite with* his *mouth deſtroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge ſhall the juſt be delivered.*] And more than this, a good man hath this advantage by his wiſdom, that it ſometimes inſtructs many how to evade thoſe ſnares, which the profane Hypocrite, with counterfeit profeſſions of friendſhip, lays to deſtroy his neighbours.

Ver. 10. *When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked periſh,* there

there is *shouting*.] We see also in this how aimable vertue and how hateful vice is, that the Inhabitants of a City generally leap for joy when good men prosper and are advanced unto power: but are so far from pitying the downfal of the wicked, that they shout when they behold them tumbling from the high places to which they were raised.

Ver. 11. *By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.*] Men of unbiassed vertue make a City flourish by the blessings they procure for it from heaven, by their prayers, by their prudent advice, their pious admonitions, and their constant study of the publick good: but the wicked, by their blasphemies, their evil counsels, their pestilent maxims, their impious doctrines, whereby they corrupt mens manners, utterly subvert the good estate thereof.

Ver. 12. *He that is void of wisdom, despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.*] It is a great weakness to speak contemptuously of any man, or to render him ridiculous (for no man is so mean but he is sensible of despisal, and may find ways to shew his resentment) therefore a thoroughly prudent person, whatsoever he thinks of others, saith nothing to their reproach.

Ver. 13. *A tale-bearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*] A man whose trade it is to ingratiate himself by defaming others, will not stick most treacherously to discover the secrets wherewith they have intrusted him: But a man whose mind is stedfastly fixed to be true and faithful to his neighbours, will study (though they have not desired him) to hide those things, which, being known, may prove injurious to them.

Ver. 14. *Where no counsel* is, *the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors* there is *safety.*] Where prudent Counsellors are wanting, a Nation goes to wrack, as certainly as a Ship doth without a Pilot: nor is one sufficient; but then a Country is safe, when there are many wise men to govern affairs: that if one fail, there may enough still remain; or what one or two sees not, others may be able to discern.

Ver. 15. *He that is surety for a stranger, shall smart* for it: *and he that hateth suretiship, is sure.*] He is in great danger to be undone, who stands bound to pay the debts of another man, especially of a stranger (VI. 1.) whose ability and honesty is unknown to him: And the way to be secure from that fear, is not only to avoid such ingagements one's self, but to abhor to see other men enter into them.

Ver. 16. *A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong* men *retain riches.*] Beauty and vertue in a woman advances her to honour; as formidable strength and power in men advances them to Riches: and as their principal care is to keep their Treasures, so hers should be to preserve her Reputation.

Ver. 17. *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but* he that is *cruel, troubleth his own flesh.*] He that hath a heart to be kind and bountiful unto his neighbours, will have this advantage by it, among many others, that he will not deny what is fit and convenient to himself: whereas the covetous and hard-hearted, as he hath no regard to his nearest relations, so he pinches his own flesh, by his sordid way of living.

Ver. 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness,* shall be *a sure reward.*] He thinks perhaps hereby to raise himself, or his posterity to greatness, but, like all other wicked men, will be deceived in his expectation; for the event of his actions never answers the design: but vertuous men shall infallibly reap the fruit of their pious, just, and charitable labours.

Ver. 19. *As righteousness* tendeth to *life: so he that pursueth evil,* pursueth it *to his own death.*] Thus God orders it in his Providence, and thus it is in the nature of things, that vertue tends to make men happy: but the more eagerly any man pursues an evil thing, the more he is bent upon his own destruction.

Ver. 20. *They that are of a froward heart,* are *abomination to the* LORD: *but* such as are *upright in* their *way,* are *his delight.*] Of all other men they are most odious to the LORD, who pretend to justice, kindness and truth; but study and advise how to compass their ends, tho' it be by the wickedest means: as on the contrary, they whose exact observance of the rules of righteousness in the whole course of their lives, testifie the integrity of their hearts, are highly in his favour and love.

Ver. 21. Though *hand* join *in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.*] Though the wicked endeavour to strengthen himself and his family by powerful leagues and confederacies, and his successors also have mighty associates to maintain his acquisitions, they shall not be able to defend themselves from the punishment their iniquity deserves: but the posterity of the righteous need not be at such pains; but, though deserted by men, escape the danger into which the other fall, by the help of GOD alone. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 22. As *a jewel of gold in a swines snout,* so is *a fair woman which is without discretion.*] As a golden ring is ill placed in the snout of a swine, which is always routing in the mire: so is beauty ill bestowed on the body of a woman, whose mind having lost all savour and relish of vertue, carries her from her husband, to wallow in filthy lust, and adulterous pleasures. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 23. *The desire of the righteous* is *only good:* but *the expectation of the wicked* is *wrath.*] The righteous desire nothing but that it may be well with all men; but the wicked wish for trouble and disturbance, especially that they may execute their malice and wrath upon those whom they hate: And accordingly GOD will deal with them; good things shall be the portion of the righteous, but his just indignation shall frustrate the expectation of the wicked.

Ver. 24. *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and* there is *that withholdeth more than is meet, but* it tendeth *to poverty.*] You may see by this how miserably they are mistaken, who imagine none so wise as the penurious: that you shall find here and there a man who communicates readily and liberally to the necessities of others, and yet his estate is so far from being impaired thereby, that it increases:

when

when others, who are ſo ſaving that they will part with nothing, no not upon the moſt juſt occaſions, do not thrive at all, but by one means or other become beggars.

Ver. 25. *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat: and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf:*] Let not him therefore that beſtows benefits, imagine thereby he ſhall be impoveriſhed, for it is the certain way to enrich himſelf: and the larger his charity is, and the more diffuſed for the refreſhment of others, the greater abundance ſhall be poured on him, and the abler ſtill ſhall he grow to do more good.

Ver. 26. *He that withholdeth corn, the people ſhall curſe him: but bleſſing* ſhall be *upon the head of him that ſelleth* it.] He that hoardeth up corn in a time of ſcarcity, on purpoſe to raiſe the price, ſhall fall into the popular hatred; and be loaded with many a curſe: but he who then opens his granaries and ſells at a moderate rate, ſhall not only have the peoples good word, but the bleſſing of God.

Ver. 27. *He that diligently ſeeketh good, procureth favour: but he that ſeeketh miſchief, it ſhall come unto him.*] He that from the time he riſes, ſtudies nothing but how to do good to others, ſhall obtain favour both with God and man; but he whoſe buſineſs it is to do miſchief, ſhall draw upon himſelf the evil he deſigns againſt others.

Ver. 28. *He that truſteth in his riches, ſhall fall: but the righteous ſhall flouriſh as a branch.*] He whoſe confidence in riches as the ſureſt ſupport and defence, makes him covetous, unjuſt and unmerciful, ſhall fall to decay like a withered leaf: but they whoſe pious dependance upon God, makes them juſt and charitable, like a flouriſhing tree, ſhall thrive and proſper.

Ver. 29. *He that troubleth his own houſe, ſhall inherit the wind: and the fool* ſhall be *ſervant to the wiſe of heart.*] He that makes or cheriſhes diſſentions and factions in his own family (or kingdom) may, by making a great buſtle and ſtir, ſeem to be a notable man; but will not only be deceived in his expectations, but defame his government, and bring his eſtate to nothing: nay, it is oftentimes ſeen that he who is thus fooliſh, loſes all his authority, and becomes a ſervant to him, who adminiſters his affairs with a more prudent care. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 30. *The fruit of the righteous* is *a tree of life; and he that winneth ſouls,* is *wiſe.*] The benefit the world receives from a juſt and charitable man is ſo great that it may be compared to the fruit of the tree of life; which keeps mankind from being miſerable: but he is the greateſt Benefactor of all, who communicates wiſdom ſo charitably and ſeaſonably, that he draws ſouls to the love of vertue.

Ver. 31. *Behold, the righteous ſhall be recompenced in the earth: much more the wicked and the ſinner.*] But who is there ſo good as to do or to ſuffer no evil? And if God do not let the juſt and charitable men (mark what I ſay) they who are ſo uſeful and beneficial to the world go without correction; who can think that the wicked, who is good for nothing, but obſtinately contemns and breaks all the Laws of God and man, ſhall eſcape the juſt puniſhment of his many crimes? *See* 1 *Pet.* IV. 18. *and* Arg. [*d*].

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins with an Admonition, often inculcated in this Book, concerning the affection wherewith a man, that would be wiſe and good, ought to receive charitable reproofs. And there are ſeveral things alſo repeated, concerning the Providence of Almighty God; *in puniſhing men according to their wickedneſs, and delivering good men from thoſe who ſeek their deſtruction: which is notably expreſſed in* three *verſes one after another,* v. 5, 6, 7. *where he obſerves how the wicked labouring to compaſs their ends, by cozenage, or by violence, even by bloud (eſpecially if they can privately make a man away) not only miſcarry in their deſigns, but are unexpectedly overturned, and ſubverted out of their places, wherein they behave themſelves with ſuch injuſtice and cruelty.*

There are divers Inſtructions alſo here repeated about ſeveral vertues and vices; eſpecially thoſe of the tongue. Among which Melancthon *commends this to the remembrance of the Reader,* v. 22. [a]lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; *who recommends to us, ſays he, the* love and care of Truth; *both in doctrines concerning Himſelf, and in Arts, and in all honeſt Covenants and Contracts. For truth being among the chiefeſt and moſt conſpicuous vertues, therefore the contrary vice is condemned, by a terrible word, and called* Abomination, *i. e. ſuch an evil as* God *deteſts with a ſingular indignation (for Idols are called* βδελύγματα, *abominations, or* abominable things) *which is principally true of ſuch lyes, as are on purpoſe invented to deſtroy mens fame; and much more of ſuch as are deviſed for the taking away their lives and the ruin of their families: ſuch as thoſe which* David *often complains were contrived againſt him.*

The Lord Bacon *hath made notable remarks alſo upon another paſſage in this Chapter,* v. 10. *where he obſerves concerning the former* [b] *part of the verſe,* " *that there is implanted in man's* " *nature a noble and excellent affection of pity* " *and compaſſion, called here* Mercy: *which* " *extends itſelf even unto brute creatures, that* " *are by divine ordination ſubject to his com-* " *mand. And therefore this compaſſion hath* " *ſome analogy with that of a Prince towards* " *his ſubjects. Nay further, it is moſt certain,* " *that the worthier any ſoul is, the larger is* " *its compaſſion. For contracted and degenerate* " *minds, imagine theſe things appertaineth not* " *to them: but the mind that looks upon it ſelf* " *as a nobler portion of the Univerſe, is kindly* " *affected towards inferiour creatures, out of* " *the communion there is between them: where-* " *fore we ſee that there were under the old* " *Law many precepts concerning this, which* " *were not ſo much merely* ceremonial, *as in-* " *ſtitutions of Mercy. As that of not eating* " *fleſh with the bloud in it, and ſuch like.* " *I ſuppoſe be means thoſe mentioned, XXIII.* Exod. 5, 19. *V.* Deut. 4. *XXII.* 6, 7. *XXV.* 4. *For, as* Grotius *hath excellently obſerved,* it is very laudable to exerciſe kindneſs towards brute creatures, that we may keep our ſelves the more

more remote, from all manner of cruelty towards men. *Which the Angel, the Jews think, reproved in* Balaam *when he chid him for striking his Ass three times. For thus they bring in the Angel speaking to him, in the great Commentary upon* Numbers; If I am required to demand satisfaction for the injury done thy Ass, concerning whom there is no Law of Justice, nor covenant of our Fathers, how much more for this, that thou goest about utterly to root out a whole Nation?

I omit what the same Lord Bacon *there says (Book VIII. of the* Adv. of Learning, *C. 2. Parab. 14.) concerning the ancient* Essens, *and* Pythagoreans, *and concerning some people now in the* Mogul's *Country, and the present* Turks, *who are full of affection to brute creatures; and only observe that he looks upon the latter part of the same verse, as a kind of caution added by the wise man; lest we should think he patronizes all sort of mercy and compassion.* "No, *the mercy which* "spares wicked persons from being cut off by the "hand of justice, is not mercy, but more cruel "than cruelty it self. For cruelty is exercised "upon single persons only: but this kind of mer-"cy, by the grant of impunity, arms the whole "band of impious men against the innocent." *So by the* Mercies of the wicked, *he understands,* mercy shewn to the wicked: *Which is an unusual form of speech, and disagreeing to the opposition which the wise man in this proverbial saying, makes between the righteous and the wicked. And therefore it is not to be embraced, nor to be looked upon as a true exposition: in which though I believe he followed* Drusius, *yet he hath very little company besides. And the sense rather lies as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase: in which if I have added more than Interpreters do, I am confident it will appear to him, that considers, not to be without reason. For these words,* the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, *seem to me to have the same sense with that proverbial speech among the Greeks,* Ἐχθρῶν δῶρα ἄδωρα.

In the twelfth verse I have expressed both senses of which the word mezod *is capable: which signifies both a* net *and a* fortress. *And so I have done in the next (v. 13.) which may be rendred two ways. Either, that* by prevaricating with his lips, a wicked man lays snares, *or* [c] *that* he is himself insnared by his prevarications. *In the same manner I have comprehended more senses than one, in several other verses; which if I should particularly mention, it would inlarge this Preface beyond its just length. Else I should have made some remarks upon v. 15. where the danger of self-love and self-conceit is represented: which hath ever this effect, that it makes men slight, if not reject good counsel; out of a vain opinion, that none can advise them better than themselves: which is to follow the direction of a fool. For it is as certain a note of folly to rely wholly upon a man's own judgment, as it is of prudence to hearken to the advice of others.*

1. *Whoso loveth instruction, loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof, is brutish.*] It is an excellent sign that a man will be wise and good, who not only patiently bears with those that tell him of his faults, but loves and is thankful for reproof: which he, who not only declines but hates, and is thereby inraged, gives way to such brutish passions and desires, that there is little hope he should ever be a man.

Ver. 2. *A good* man *obtaineth favour of the* LORD: *but a man of wicked devices will be condemn.*] He that studies how to do good to others, attracts the good-will and blessing of the LORD upon himself: but he who contrives mischievous designs, under a specious shew of Religion and the publick good, shall be judged by him, who knows the heart, to suffer what he deserves.

Ver. 3. *A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.*] For no man, though never so subtil or powerful, shall be able to establish himself and his family, who lays the foundation of his greatness in wickedness: But the righteous, like a tree that hath taken a deep root in the earth, though shaken with storms and tempests, shall remain unmoveable in a flourishing estate.

Ver. 4. *A vertuous woman* is *a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed,* is *as rottenness in his bones.*] A wife that strenuously imploys herself in her domestick affairs, and can prudently command her own passions and desires, is a singular ornament and honour to her husband; who may well glory in his happiness: but she whose lasciviousness, or other infamous quality, makes him hang down his head for shame, is an incurable grief, and vexation, consuming him and all that he hath.

Ver. 5. *The thoughts of the righteous* are *right:* but *the counsels of the wicked* are *deceit,*] The designs of good men are managed with exact justice and truth: but the contrivances of the wicked are carried on with fraud, dissimulation, and all manner of deceit.

Ver. 6. *The words of the wicked* are *to lie in wait for bloud: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.*] Nay (such is the height of their wickedness) they consult one with another, and lay plots to take away secretly the life of those who stand in the way of their designs: but men sincerely good give the best advice they can to deliver such innocent persons from their bloudy snares.

Ver. 7. *The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*] And GOD befriends them also; who not only defeats those wicked projectors in their designs, but so totally overthrows them and their families, that no footstep of them remains: whereas, he not only continues, but settles the just man's family in a durable succession (as I have often said, *v.* 3. and X. 25, 30. XI. 31.) when they that assaulted them are quite extinct.

Ver. 8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.*] True prudence directing a man to effect his ends by fair and honest means, will procure him the greatest esteem, and the most lasting praise: but he who contrives by fraud, and such like crooked ways, to attain his aim, shall fall into utter contempt, and be scorned by all as a foolish knave.

Ver. 9. *He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.*] He is far happier who makes no

ſhew in the world, but hath a competent eſtate; than he who appears in great ſplendor and pomp abroad, but wants bread to eat when he is at home.

Ver. 10. *A righteous* man *regardeth the life of his beaſt: but the tender mercies of the wicked* are *cruel.*] A good man takes care that his beaſt be well uſed, and have food and reſt convenient for it; which is more than men bent upon wickedneſs will do for their neighbours: For their very kindneſſes being treacherous, are a cruel cheat; nay, the higheſt expreſſions which they make of tenderneſs and compaſſion (whereby they induce others to repoſe a truſt in them) are intended merely as a cover, for the miſchief they mean more ſecurely to do them. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 11. *He that tilleth his land ſhall be ſatisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain* perſons, is *void of underſtanding.*] He that takes pains in an honeſt employment, ſuppoſe in tilling his land, ſhall find it requite him with ſufficient, if not plentiful proviſion for himſelf and his family: but he that is idle, falling into the company of looſe and wicked perſons, will find at laſt (by the deſperate courſes into which they will lead him) that he wants not only bread, but underſtanding.

Ver. 12. *The wicked deſireth the net of evil* men: *but the root of the righteous yieldeth* fruit.] The wicked deſires *two* things, firſt to do as much miſchief as he can by his wiles and arts of deceiving; and then to be ſecure in his wickedneſs: but the righteous make every body the better for them; and thereby enjoy that ſafety, which the other have only in their wiſhes and deſires.

Ver. 13. *The wicked is ſnared by the tranſgreſſion of* his *lips: but the juſt ſhall come out of trouble.*] The wicked inſnares himſelf by that deceitful talk, wherewith he deſigned to have inſnared others: but the righteous eſcapes the danger; nay, by his prudent diſcourſe avoids very great difficulties wherein otherways he might have been intangled. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 14. *A man ſhall be ſatisfied with good by the fruit of* his *mouth, and the recompence of a mans hands ſhall be rendred unto him.*] There is no man gives good counſel and advice (eſpecially in publick affairs) but he ſhall reap the fruit of it abundantly himſelf: and there is no good work he doth for the benefit of others, but GOD will requite it, and make it turn to his own good account.

Ver. 15. *The way of a fool* is *right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counſel,* is *wiſe.*] A fool is ſo conceited that he conſults no body but himſelf; for whatſoever he doth, in his own opinion he is always in the right: but a wiſe man will not rely upon his own judgment alone; but ſuſpecting himſelf, makes uſe of the ſound advice of other men.

Ver. 16. *A fool's wrath is preſently known: but a prudent* man *covereth ſhame.*] A fool (like a beaſt) is no ſooner provoked but he grows angry; and, which is worſe, it appears immediately in his countenance, words and actions: whereas a prudent man is not unſeemly tranſported by his paſſion; but ſtifles his reſentments, even of the moſt reproachful injuries that are done him.

Ver. 17. He that *ſpeaketh truth, ſheweth forth righteouſneſs; but a falſe witneſs, deceit.*] He that freely and boldly ſpeaks the truth, and all the truth, and nothing but the truth, demonſtrates himſelf an honeſt man, and doth juſtice unto others: but he that conceals the truth or forges falſhoods, and teſtifies unto lyes, declares himſelf both a deceitful and miſchievous perſon.

Ver. 18. *There is that ſpeaketh like the pierc-ings of a ſword: but the tongue of the wiſe* is *health.*] A cut-throat is not more pernicious than he; and they are not much better, whoſe buſineſs it is by ſecret calumnies to wound the reputation of their neighbours, or to make diſcords and diviſions among them: which a good man uſes all his skill to cure; perſwading them to love, unity and peace.

Ver. 19. *The lip of truth ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever: but a lying tongue* is *but for a moment.*] He that ſpeaks the truth (being always conformable to himſelf) hath this advantage, that he can never be diſproved, nor conſequently diſcredited: but a liar, though he may at preſent be believed, is ſoon confuted; for he is apt to contradict himſelf, and blaſt his own reputation for ever.

Ver. 20. *Deceit* is *in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counſellors of peace* is *joy.*] They do but deceive themſelves, who look for any ſatisfaction from diſſentions and diſturbances; which they cannot contrive without much fear and anxiety of mind: but, as they are always cheerful who conſult nothing but peace, concord, and happy ſettlement, ſo they will have great joy, whatſoever the iſſue be, of ſuch good deſigns.

Ver. 21. *There ſhall no evil happen to the juſt: but the wicked ſhall be filled with miſchief.*] For the divine Providence takes a peculiar care of good men, to avert the harm that the iniquity of the wicked intends them: which ſhall fall upon themſelves in ſuch abundance as to overwhelm them.

Ver. 22. *Lying lips* are *abomination to the* LORD: *but they that deal truly* are *his delight.*] It is thought no great matter, if a man break his word, or any way deceive his neighbour; but know, that this is a thing exceeding hateful to the Divine Majeſty: and on the contrary, they that faithfully perform their promiſes, and in all things deal truly with their neighbours, are no leſs acceptable to him. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth fooliſhneſs.*] A prudent man conceals his knowledge, and will not make a ſhew of being ſo wiſe as really he is: but a fool publiſhes his ignorance, as if he was ambitious that every one ſhould know he is a fool.

Ver. 24. *The hand of the diligent ſhall bear rule: but the ſlothful ſhall be under tribute.*] He that taketh pains in an honeſt employment, ſhall take his eaſe at laſt; nay, raiſe himſelf to dominion and power; but he whoſe ſloth makes him live by ſhirking and deceit, ſhall bring that toil upon himſelf which he would avoid; when his poverty and villany have reduced him to be a ſlave.

Ver. 25.

Ver. 25. *Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.*] Anxious cares and sollicitude how to live, depress the spirit of a man, otherwise magnanimous: but the kind and incouraging discourses of a Friend (much more the gracious promises of GOD) erect it, nay, make it glad.

Ver. 26. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.*] As in other things, so in this, a righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour, that he doth not delude himself with vain hopes; nor miss his end, as the wicked doth in all his designs.

Ver. 27. *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.*] There is nothing more vile than a lazy fellow that lives by cheating; who, if he catch, shall not be able to keep his prey: but he is a valuable man, who by honest diligence getteth wealth; which shall durably remain with him.

Ver. 28. *In the way of righteousness is life; and in the path-way thereof there is no death.*] True goodness leads unto endless prosperity and happiness: nor is there any one action of vertue that tends to make a man miserable; as all manner of wickedness doth.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins as the foregoing did, with an Admonition about receiving instruction and reproof with due regard to them; especially from Parents, who cannot be thought to intend any thing, but the good of their Children.

And as he did there, so here again the Wise man gives fresh advice about the government of the tongue, *about* diligence *and* industry: *and hath several observations, not much different from what he made before, of the advantage which the Righteous have of the Wicked in a great many instances, which are easie to observe in the Paraphrase.*

And in the eighth *verse he seems to me to teach* [a] contentedness of mind; *by shewing that the poor have a great advantage of the rich in an evil time. Some indeed take the sentence quite otherways, as if the Wise man intended to represent the great advantage rich men have of the poor, in this sense*; a rich man, when he fears any evil from his enemies, can divert it by a sum of money: but a poor man when he is threatned, dare not stay, but runs away. *And others there are who go a middle way, and think he intends to shew, that each of them have their advantages of several kinds. But considering the opposition that is usual in this Book, between one part of the verse and the other; this seems not to be the meaning: yet I have mentioned it, that they who do not take the opposition to be as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase; may have their choice, and follow which sense they like best. As for that of* Clemens Alexandrinus *L. III.* Pædagog. *Chap. 7. who thus glosses upon the former part of the verse,* ἐαν πλουσιος ὑπαρχῃς σωθησῃ, if a man be rich, he shall be saved by giving away to those in want, *it doth not answer to the opposite part of the verse; unless we should interpret it thus:* as for the poor, they shall have no rebuke for not giving, because they have nothing to give. *But I look upon this as not genuine; though his Admonition upon this occasion be excellent, which is this: He that earnestly presses to go up to heaven must* κατὰ βακτηρίαν τὴν ἀγαθοεργὸν ἀναβαίνειν, carry about with him that good staff of beneficence, and by relieving those that are afflicted, partake himself of true rest and refreshment.

Which it is impossible to find any way but in [b] *vertuous courses, as the fifteenth verse suggests to us; the sense of which according to the plain import of the Hebrew words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase. But as the last part of it sounds in our language, it will not be incongruous, to take the meaning of the whole thus:* If a man have understanding enough to be thoroughly good, he will find things favourable to his honest desires; but they that take evil courses, meet with great difficulties, and are forced to go backward and forward, and wind and turn every way, to bring about their ends, or save themselves perhaps from ruin.

[c] *There are several other notable sentences in this Chapter; upon which, if I should enlarge, it would be to write a Book. The only two which* Melancthon *singled out for the observation of his Scholars, are the one of them in* v. 10. *concerning* pride. *Upon which he remembers them of the* Greek *proverb,* Ὄρος ὄρει οὐ μίγνυται. A mountain cannot mix with a mountain, *i. e. two high men will never agree together: and of another excellent saying among the* Latins, Crede mihi, sapere, est non multum sapere, Believe me, to be wise, is not to be over wise. *For they whose minds are infected with a vain opinion of themselves, either cannot see the truth, if it be against their thoughts; or if they do, they will not acknowledge it, for fear they should yield and confess themselves overcome.*

[d] *The other is* v. 23. *the latter part of which he renders differently from all that I have read;* there is much food in the furrows of the poor, & alii sine modo cumulant; *and* others heap up without any measure, *that is, to no purpose, when a little will suffice. Which is a wise saying, but not agreeable to the Hebrew Text.*

I shall only add, that as the Chapter begins with an Admonition to hearken to reproof, (especially from Parents) which is repeated again in the middle, v. 13, 18. *so it concludes,* [e] *in the last verse but one, with an advice to Parents, not to spare the rod, if reproof will not do: which is but necessary in very young Children; because there is no other means perhaps to make them understand the difference between good and evil, decent and unseemly; but only to make them smart for the one, and to give them some sensible pleasure for the other. Some Children, that is, are so disposed, that they must be thus treated: and it seems a wonderful piece of wisdom in the old* Lacedæmonians *(as* Plutarch *relates in his Laconical Institutes) that, out of an universal love and care for each other's good, made it lawful for any man to correct the Child of another person, if he saw him do amiss. And if the Child complained of it to his Father, it was look'd upon as a fault in the Father if he did not correct him*

again

again for making that complaint. Such was their confidence in each other, that every man being as much concerned for another man's Children as for his own, would never do them any injury, nor unreasonably check them without cause. For this is the Character Plutarch *gives of them; that they did not as in other cities,* look every man only after his own children, servants and cattle; but every man lookt upon what was his neighbour's as his own, ὅπως ὡς πλείστη κοινωνία καὶ φιλοφροσύνη ἐν ἀλλήλοις that there might be, as much as was possible, a communion among them, and they might take care of what belonged to others, as if they were their own proper goods.

1. A *Wise son* heareth *his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.*] A good Child will reverently receive and obey, both the instruction and the reprehension of his Father: but there is no hope of him, that laughs and scoffs, when he is admonished or chidden for his faults.

Ver. 2. *A man shall eat good by the fruit of* his *mouth: but the soul of the transgressors* shall eat *violence.*] He that speaks well of others, or gives them faithful counsel, shall reap the benefit thereof himself: and so shall they that perfidiously calumniate or deceive them, suffer themselves that injury which they desired to do their neighbours.

Ver. 3. *He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life:* but *he that openeth wide his lips, shall have destruction.*] It is worth a man's pains to watch over his tongue; for he that carefully observes every word he speaks, preserves himself from much trouble and danger: but he that blurts out every thing that comes into his head, not minding what he saith, is in the ready way to ruin.

Ver. 4. *The soul of the sluggard desireth, and* hath *nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*] There is nothing gotten by sloth, neither riches nor learning; which he in vain desires that will not labour for them: but the diligent and industrious shall never want satisfaction, but enjoy perhaps a great deal more than he desired.

Ver. 5. *A righteous* man *hateth lying: but a wicked* man *is loathsome, and cometh to shame.*] A good man not only avoids but hates all manner of falshood, both in word and deed: but the wicked delights to abuse others with such abominable lies and frauds, as make him no less loathsome than a stinking carcass; and so contemptible, that he dare not shew his face for shame.

Ver. 6. *Righteousness keepeth* him that is *upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.*] The justice of all honest and upright designs will be a sufficient security to them: but all wicked contrivances are overthrown by their own iniquity.

Ver. 7. *There is that maketh himself rich, yet* hath *nothing:* there is *that maketh himself poor, yet* hath *great riches.*] You will be deceived, if you judge of men by the outward appearance; for there are those, who have the vanity to make a great show in the world, when they are not worth a farthing: and others, who are so cunning as to dissemble their vast estates under the garb of poverty.

Ver. 8. *The ransom of a man's life* are *his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.*] Rich men are not always so happy as they are imagined; for their wealth sometimes only serves to make them accused of high crimes, and then to bring them off with a huge sum of money, which they pay to save their lives: but no body is apt to find fault with the poor, or to bring any charge against them. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 9. *The light of the righteous rejoyceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.*] The happiness of the just is great and illustrious, like the light of the sun; and increases still to their endless joy: but the happiness of the wicked is weak and dim, like the light of a candle; and will at last be utterly extinguished.

Ver. 10. *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well-advised* is *wisdom.*] They that have an high conceit of themselves, and will yield to none, declare their folly; in that they can do nothing without strife and contention: but they that are so humble as to be advised by others, do all things prudently, in quietness and peace. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 11. *Wealth* gotten *by vanity, shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour, shall increase.*] Wealth ill gotten (by lying, gaming, cheating, *&c.*) soon wastes away: but what is gotten by honest labour, swells to a greater heap, which moulders not but still increases.

Ver. 12. *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but* when *the desire cometh,* it is *a tree of life.*] The delay of that which a man eagerly expects is such an affliction, that it differs little from a lingering disease: but when he enjoys what he hath long lookt for, it restores him presently to his former vigour and liveliness.

Ver. 13. *Whoso despiseth the word, shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment, shall be rewarded.*] He that despises the good admonitions or counsels that are given him, is his own enemy, and destroys himself: but he that reverently submits to the divine commandment, makes God his Friend, who will reward him for it.

Ver. 14. *The law of the wise* is *a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*] The Instructions of a good man ought to be as a Law to him that receives them; for like the water of a perpetual spring, they are most beneficial: especially to preserve him from those pernicious and destructive principles whereby too many are insnared.

Ver. 15. *Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors* is *hard.*] A prudent, pious and regular behaviour, is most amiable and acceptable to all men: but the conversation of such as live by no law but their own lusts, like rough way, is grievously uneasie. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 16. *Every prudent* man *dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open* his *folly.*] All prudent persons are so cautious not to discredit themselves, that they undertake nothing but with due deliberation, and what they understand: but a fool discovers his weakness to be greater than was thought, by rash medling with matters out of his reach.

Ver. 17. *A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador* is *health.*] A Messenger, or a Minister, that wickedly betrays his

his truſt, is ſo injurious to (his Prince or) him that employs him, that he ſhall not eſcape a juſt puniſhment: but he that faithfully diſcharges this Office (healing ſuppoſe, or preventing diſferences and breaches) procures ſafety to himſelf, as well as to the perſon that uſed his ſervice.

Ver. 18. *Poverty and ſhame* ſhall be to *him that refuſeth inſtruction: but he that regardeth reproof, ſhall be honoured.*] He that proudly rejects inſtruction, and diſdains to be checkt in his lewd courſes, is likely to be a beggar, and expoſed to the publick ſcorn: but he that is ſo humble as to give a due regard to reproof, and to correct his errors, not only gains a juſt eſteem, but is likely to riſe unto dignity and honour.

Ver. 19. *The deſire accompliſhed is ſweet to the ſoul: but* it is *abomination to fools to depart from evil.*] It is an high ſatisfaction to enjoy what we earneſtly deſire: but fools herein defeat themſelves: being ſo wedded to their wickedneſs, that they will not quit it, if that muſt be the condition of their being ſo happy.

Ver. 20. *He that walketh with wiſe* men, *ſhall be wiſe: but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.*] He that keeps company with wiſe and good men, is likely to be ſo himſelf; that is, to be happy: but he who aſſociates himſelf with the wicked, ſhall be as certainly ruined, as he will be unavoidably infected with their wickedneſs.

Ver. 21. *Evil purſueth ſinners: but to the righteous, good ſhall be repayed.*] The wickedneſs of ſinners purſues them to their unavoidable deſtruction: and the good which righteous men do, will infallibly return into their own boſom, and reward them with many bleſſings.

Ver. 22. *A good* man *leaveth an inheritance to his childrens children: and the wealth of the ſinner* is *laid up for the juſt.*] A man that doth good with his eſtate, takes the ſureſt courſe to ſettle it upon his poſterity for many generations: but the wealth of him, who regards nothing but his own ſinful luſts and pleaſures, ſhall be transferred from his Family unto one that is truly vertuous.

Ver. 23. *Much food* is in *the tillage of the poor: but there is* that is *deſtroyed for want of judgment.*] A poor man many times makes a plentiful proviſion for himſelf and his Family, out of a few acres of Land; which he manages judiciouſly and honeſtly: but there is a ſort of men, whoſe larger eſtates are waſted; either for want of skill to improve their ground, or becauſe they do not pay the hireling his wages. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 24. He *that ſpareth his rod, hateth his ſon: but he that loveth him chaſteneth him betimes.*] Fond affection, which maketh a Parent forbear to chaſtiſe his Child for the faults that cannot otherways be amended, is no better than hatred; for it helps to undo him: therefore he that truly loves his Child muſt not be ſo indulgent; but as ſoon as ill inclinations begin to appear, while he is tender and flexible, give him early correction as well as admonition, before he have accuſtomed himſelf to the doing evil. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 25. *The righteous eateth to the ſatisfying of his ſoul: but the belly of the wicked ſhall want.*] A righteous man never wants ſatisfaction, becauſe his deſires are moderate, and he lives in a temperate uſe of God's bleſſings: but wicked men, ſome of them, bring themſelves to extreme poverty by their luxury and riot; and others of them are indigent even in the midſt of the greateſt abundance; becauſe their deſires are inſatiable, and they never think they have enough.

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *As the foregoing Chapter began with a deſcription of a towardly Child, ſo this with the Character of a good Mother of a family: who by her prudent care makes it flouriſh; when a lewd woman throws the houſe (as we ſay) out of the windows: for ſo the wiſe man obſerves.* She pulls down the houſe with her own hands, *that is, ruins the family without any other help.* There needs no more than a bad wife to undo a Family.

[b] *A little after this* (v. 4.) *there follows an Admonition for the man without doors, as here for the woman within; that he do not neglect his husbandry. Of which* Oxen, *every one knows, were the principal inſtruments: being not only employed in that Country (as they are here) in plowing the ground, and carrying home the crop; but alſo in treading out the corn. The ſtrength alſo of the* Ox *(which is here mentioned) is celebrated in all Authors: and thence* Bulls *are called* Abbarim, *i. e.* robuſt, *among the Hebrews, who were very careful about the breeding of theſe moſt profitable creatures. It is not my buſineſs to inquire after the difference between* Alaphim *and* Sor, *(which we render here, in this Verſe, by the ſame Engliſh word) but certain it is, they are uſed promiſcuouſly for either ſex; and the latter without any reſpect to age: though moſt commonly it ſignifies one grown to maturity, which we call an* Ox.

[c] *Upon the next Verſe but one* (v. 6.) *the Lord* Bacon *(in his VII. Book of the* Adv. of Learning, *Chap.* 2.) *hath made this uſeful gloſs,* He that comes to ſeek after knowledge, with a mind to ſcorn and cenſure, ſhall be ſure to find matter enough for his humour, but none for his inſtruction. *One reaſon of which is, that this humour of deriding all things, ſprings from a great pride and conceit of their own wit, which diſpoſes them to ſeek for Wiſdom not from others, but wholly from themſelves: and ſo (as the Wiſe man obſerves) they are not likely to find it where it is not to be had. When he that attributes leſs to himſelf, and hath the humility to liſten to inſtruction, in a ſhort time attains great Wiſdom. I cannot wholly omit the opinion of* Janſenius; *who thinks the Wiſe man means, that he who hath accuſtomed himſelf to laugh at all wholeſome counſel, and in ſome ſtreight or other begins to think what is beſt to do, commonly finds himſelf at ſuch a loſs, that he cannot ſee his way out of it. And it may be applied to thoſe alſo,* who having mockt at Religion all their days, at laſt deſire to underſtand it; but cannot, through their own inveterate indiſpoſition to it.

[d] *In the next verſe I have joined thoſe two ſenſes together, which it may have according to the different*

different acception of the word Minneged, *signifying either before, or from before.*

[e] *The next* (v. 8.) *I take to be that, which the Lord* Bacon, *minding the sense rather than the words, thus translates* (Advancement of Learning, *B. VIII. C. 2. Parab.* 30.) Prudens advertit ad gressus suos, stultus divertit ad dolos. *Which his English translator* (*who referrs this to* XXVII. Prov. 12. *which is quite to another purpose*) *reads thus,* A wise man is wary of his way, a cunning fool seeks evasions. *Upon which that* Lord *thus descants:* "*There* "*be two sorts of Wisdom, the one true and* "sound, *the other* counterfeit *and false:* "*which last* Solomon *doubts not to call folly.* "*He that applies himself to the former, takes* "*heed to his own ways and footings, foreseeing* "*dangers, studying remedies, using the assistance* "*of good men, and fortifying himself against the* "*wicked: wary how he enters upon a business;* "*and not unprepared for a retreat, and how* "*he may come off handsomely: attend upon ad-* "*vantages, courageous against impediments,* "*with innumerable other things, that relate to* "*the government of his own ways and actions.* "*But that other kind of Wisdom is made up al-* "*together of fallacies, and cunning devices; and* "*relies wholly upon the hopes of circumventing* "*others, and framing them as he list himself.* "*This Wisdom the Parable rejects not only as* "*wicked, but as foolish. For first, it is not in* "*the number of things, which are in our own* "*power, nor is it directed by any constant rule;* "*but new stratagems must be every day devised,* "*the old failing and growing useless. And,* "secondly, *as soon as ever a man hath got the* "*name, and the opinion of a cunning crafty* "*companion, he hath deprived himself utterly* "*of the principal instrument for the management* "*of his affairs, which is* Trust: *And so he* "*will find by experience all things to go cross to* "*his desires. For,* lastly, *these arts and shifts,* "*however they promise fair, and much please* "*such as practise them, yet they are commonly* "*frustrated, and which is worse, end sadly.*" *Which* Tacitus *hath well observed in these remarkable words,* Consilia callida & audacia, expectatione læta, tractatu dura, eventu tristia. "*Crafty and audacious counsels, are joyful* "*in the expectation, difficult in the management,* "*and sad in the event.*"

[f] *There is the same difficulty in the* 9th *verse that was in the* seventh: *For the word* Jaliz *is translated by some* mock, *by others* excuse: *and so (besides what I have comprehended in my Paraphrase) there may be this sense of the words;* Fools endeavour to make handsome apologies for their faults, and to find out colourable excuses; but upright men freely confess them, and easily grant a pardon for them; and make up the difference which they raise in a friendly manner. *Or if we retain the acception of* mocking, *this may be the sense of the verse;* Fools laugh and jeer at those who have committed a sin; but good men pity them, and by kind reproofs seek their amendment. *I know not how otherways to make out the opposition, which is usual between one part of the verse and the other, unless we chuse to take it thus;* That when fools offend God in the highest manner, they make nothing of it; but if good men in the least offend, they presently beg his pardon, and seek his grace and favour. *The former part of the sentence also may be inverted, and make this plain obvious sense; which is as natural as any:* Sin will expose those to scorn, who are so foolish as to commit it: *And then the latter part is as plain:* But the upright will have favour both with God and man. *A good Admonition to them that make a mock of sin; which will in time make a mock of them, and expose them as ridiculous fools.*

[g] *Some take the next* (verse 10.) *to be an Admonition to a prudent man, that he should conceal both his grief and his joy; and keep them to himself. But it is rather an advice to every one, not to censure too heavily the passions of grief or of joy in others; because the causes of them may be unknown to us. Or we may look upon the former part of the Verse, as an admonition to those that are at ease;* not to censure too severely the complaints of those that are in pain or trouble, *and the latter part as an admonition to such as are delivered from trouble,* to be more thankful than any one can exhort them to be, because they best know what reason they have for it.

[h] *The next Verse but one* (v. 12.) *is the only sentence which* Melancthon *points out to his Scholars, as most remarkable in this Chapter. Which he takes to be an admonition of the weakness of mens judgment, and all humane counsels: which mistake lamentably, and lead men frequently into ruin. According to that Saying of* Simonides, [illegible] shows and seeming appearances do violence to Truth, *or* Truth is forced to give way to the mere show of it: and that other, [illegible] shadows too oft cheat us of the reality. *Against which there is no remedy, but the word of* God, *and invoking his direction: according to such sayings as these,* Thy word is a light to my feet, *&c.* Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust in him, and he will bring it to pass. This shall be your wisdom, to walk in my precepts, *Deut. IV.*

[i] *And as some are deceived by their own counsels, so others by the counsel of flatterers; if they be so simple as to believe every one that pretends to kindness,* v. 15. *Where* Bochartus *notes very appositely, that* as prudence without simplicity degenerates into craft; so simplicity without prudence, is no better than mere sotuity.

[k] *In like manner the wise man observes,* v. 23. *that talking without doing is vain; and to no purpose; but only to be a cover perhaps for Idleness. As the Lord* Bacon, (Advanc. of Learning, *B. VIII. C.* 11. *Parab.* 28.) *glosses upon that Verse in these words:* "Solomon *here separates the fruit of the* labour of the tongue, "*and of the* labour of the hands, *as if want* "*was the revenue of the one, and wealth the* "*revenue of the other. For it commonly comes* "*to pass, that they who talk liberally, boast* "*much, and promise mighty matters, are beg-* "*gars; and receive no benefit by their brags, or* "*by any thing they discourse of. Nay, rather* "*for the most part such men are not industrious* "*and diligent in their employment; but only*

"*feed*

" feed and fill themselves with words, as with " wind. Certainly, as the Poet says, Qui silet, " est firmus, He that is conscious to himself of " proficiency in his endeavours, contents himself " with inward applause in his own breast, and " holds his peace; but he who knows within " himself that he only hunts after vain-glory, " and hath nothing else to live upon, talks thun- " dantly, and reports wonders unto others.

There are several other remarkable things in the rest of the Chapter; but this Preface is already so long, that I shall only touch upon the vet. 34.

[l] *Where they seem to me to have translated the Hebrew most exactly, who take the word* Chesed *in the ordinary sense of it, for* mercy *or* clemency; *not for* reproach, *which is never signifies unless, perhaps, once,* Lev. XX. 17. *of which there may be a just doubt made. As for the* Chattash, *no body doubts but it signifies a* sin-offering, *as well as* sin; *yet, with respect to our translation, I have endeavoured to express both senses of those two words in my Paraphrase.*

1. *EVery wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.*] He hath a great Treasure, whosoever he be, that hath a wife and vertuous wife; for she alone by her diligence and prudent administration, is able to raise her family, and increase its riches and reputation: But she that is foolish, and void of goodness, by her negligence, ill management, and luxury, without any other assistance, will lay it low, and waste all that hath been gotten by her predecessors care. *See* Arg. [a].

Ver. 2. *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the* LORD: *but he that is perverse in his ways, despiseth him.*] He that sincerely discharges his duty in all the actions of his life, hath a due regard and reverence to the LORD; from which all vertue flows: but he that cares not what he doth, so he do but satisfie his own lusts and passions, lives in a profane contempt of his Majesty; which is the very fountain of all wickedness.

Ver. 3. *In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.*] A fool is so insolent that he boldly calumniates and wounds the reputation of others, though it come home at last, with a terrible back-blow, upon himself; but wise men are careful of their words, not to offend, much less abuse, the meanest person; and thereby they remain in safety.

Ver. 4. *Where no Oxen* are, *the crib* is *clean: but much increase* is *by the strength of the Ox.*] If the fields lie fallow and be neglected, a famine must needs follow: but good husbandry bestowed upon them, makes great plenty. *See* Arg. [b].

Ver. 5. *A faithful witness will not lye: but a false witness will utter lyes.*] A person of integrity will not be prevailed withal, either for fear or favour, to justifie the least untruth: but a man of no conscience, who hath accustomed himself to lying, cares not how many falshoods he testifies, which he utters without any difficulty.

Ver. 6. *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easie unto him that understandeth.*] He that scoffs and jeers at every thing he reads or hears would be thought wise, but loses all his pains, which perhaps he takes, to be so. When a serious person, who doth not think himself too wise to learn, easily and quickly attains the knowledge of things necessary, and useful for him. *See* Arg. [c].

Ver. 7. *Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*] Observe a fool (and a wicked man is no better) as diligently as thou pleasest, and thou shalt never learn any good from him; and therefore it is best to flee the company of such persons, whose discourse thou perceivest tends to nothing but vice and mischief. *See* Arg. [d].

Ver. 8. *The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.*] The greatest cunning and subtilty that a truly wise and good man studies, is to understand what he ought to do, and what to avoid, upon all occasions: but all the skill of wicked men, such is their folly, lies in cheating tricks, and in devising arts of circumvention and deceit. *See* Arg. [e].

Ver. 9. *Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.*] Lewd men, as if it were but a sport, care not what injury they do their neighbours, and when they have done, laugh at those that talk to them of making satisfaction: but among men exactly vertuous, there is nothing but good-will, which makes them live without offence, or presently reconcile themselves to those they have offended. *See* Arg. [f].

Ver. 10. *The heart knoweth his own bitterness: and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*] No body can know what another suffers, so well as he himself: and he alone is privy to the greatness of that joy, which springs from the happy conclusion of his sufferings. *See* Arg. [g].

Ver. 11. *The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.*] Men of sincere integrity are happier in a mean cottage, than the wicked are in their palaces: For, when the great and potent families of those wicked men are over-turned, the despicable family of the sincerely pious shall flourish and grow illustrious.

Ver. 12. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man: but the end thereof* are *the ways of death.*] Examine every thing strictly and impartially, and be not led merely by thy appetite; for that makes many actions seem innocent, which in the issue prove deadly destructive. *See* Arg. [h].

Ver. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth* is *heaviness.*] Do not think that every one that laughs is merry, or that profuse and immoderate joy is true pleasure; for it leaves the heart more heavy and sad afterwards, especially when the mind reflects upon it: Nay, such is the vanity of this present life, there is no joy without a mixture of sorrow; which oft-times treads so close upon its heels, that it immediately follows.

Ver. 14. *The back-slider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man* shall be satisfied *from himself.*] He that, to avoid a danger, revolts from those vertuous courses, unto which he knows he ought to have adhered, shall bring upon himself misery enough, by his own

own devices: But a truly good man is, even in this, far ſuperiour to him, that though he ſhould ſuffer, his own integrity and the clearneſs and quietneſs of his conſcience, gives him abundant ſatisfaction.

Ver. 15. *The ſimple believeth every word: but the prudent* man *looketh well to his going.*] It is a mark of great ſillineſs to be credulous; that is, to take all thoſe for friends who make profeſſion of it, and eaſily to follow every one's advice: for a prudent man is ſuſpicious, and proceeds cautiouſly; examining before he truſt, and conſidering well, before he do as he is adviſed. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 16. *A wiſe* man *feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.*] A wiſe man being admoniſhed of his error, and of his danger, is afraid of incurring the divine diſpleaſure; and inſtantly ſtarts back from that evil way, into which he was entring, or wherein he was ingag'd: but a fool ſtorms at thoſe that would ſtop him in his courſe, and proceeds boldly and ſecurely to his own ruin.

Ver. 17. He that is *ſoon angry, dealeth fooliſhly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.*] He whoſe anger is preſently kindled, and breaks out when he is offended, may do ſuch things, when the fit is upon him, as none but a fool would be guilty of; but he is nothing ſo bad as him, who, ſuppreſſing his wrath, lets it boil in his breaſt, and deliberately contrives how to take a cruel revenge: for moſt men are inclined to pity the weakneſs of him that is haſty, but this man's wickedneſs is odious, and execrable unto all.

Ver. 18. *The ſimple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*] Inconſiderate men will never leave their folly, till they feel the woful effects of it: but they who are cautious and adviſed, will heartily embrace all the means of Inſtruction, and endeavour to arrive at the perfection of knowledge, which will prove a ſingular ornament and glory to them.

Ver. 19. *The evil bow before the good: and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*] Evil doers had beſt not be inſolent in their proſperity; for they may not only be brought low, but have been ſeen to humble themſelves before the face of thoſe good men, whom they had oppreſſed; the moſt impious of them, that ſtuck at nothing which would ſupport them in their wickedneſs, have been forced to wait as humble ſupplicants at the gate of that juſt man (whom they deſpiſed and abuſed) and implore his favour and relief.

Ver. 20. *The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich* hath *many friends.*] There is little ſincere kindneſs left in the world; for if a man fall into poverty, his near neighbour, nay, even he that profeſſed friendſhip to him before, not only forſakes him, but hates his company; but if a man grow very rich (let it be by what means it will) there are many that before took no notice of him, who will pretend to love him; nay, the greateſt perſons offer him their favour.

Ver. 21. *He that deſpiſeth his neighbour, ſinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.*] But let ſuch men know that it is a greater ſin than they imagine, and ſhall be ſeverely puniſhed, to over-look their poor neighbour, and deny him their charitable relief: which whoſoever compaſſionately affords him, not only doth a good deed, but ſhall be amply rewarded for it.

Ver. 22. *Do they not err that deviſe evil? but mercy and truth* ſhall be *to them that deviſe good.*] Need I tell you (when it is ſo known a truth) that they miſs their end, and do but contrive their own ruin, who carry on miſchievous deſigns againſt the innocent? But they that take the ſame pains to ſtudy how to do men good, ſhall never fail of that bountiful reward, which is ſecured to them by the faithful promiſe of GOD.

Ver. 23. *In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips* tendeth *only to penury.*] If a man take pains in any honeſt employment, though never ſo mean, it will bring him in ſome profit: but to ſpend one's time in talking only, and perhaps boaſting what he can do, tends to nothing, but to make a man a beggar. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 24. *The crown of the wiſe* is *their riches:* but *the fooliſhneſs of fools* is *folly.*] Riches are a ſingular advantage and ornament to a wiſe and vertuous man, who knows how to uſe them: but ſuch is the folly of wicked men, that their Wealth makes them the more vile, and only gives them the greater means to ſhow what ſenſeleſs fools they are.

Ver. 25. *A true witneſs delivereth ſouls: but a deceitful* witneſs *ſpeaketh lyes.*] An upright man will not fear to indanger himſelf in juſtifying the truth, to ſave the lives of thoſe that are falſly accuſed: but falſe and deceitful men boldly pour out lyes and calumnies, though thereby they deſtroy the innocent.

Ver. 26. *In the fear of the* LORD is *ſtrong confidence; and his children ſhall have a place of refuge.*] A religious care to pleaſe the LORD in all things, gives a man the firmeſt reſolution, and the ſtrongeſt confidence of ſecurity and protection in all dangers: And his children after him may flee to GOD for ſafety; and hope to fare the better for their pious father's ſake.

Ver. 27. *The fear of the* LORD is *a fountain of life, to depart from the ſnares of death.*] There is nothing makes a man live ſo comfortably and happily as this Religious care to avoid every thing offenſive to his Majeſty; which like a perpetual Spring, gives endleſs ſatisfaction; and diverts a man from thoſe dangerous ways, wherein others are intangled to their utter deſtruction.

Ver. 28. *In the multitude of people* is *the kings honour: but in the want of people* is *the deſtruction of the prince.*] The honour and ſplendour of a King depends upon the multitude, wealth, and ſtrength of his Subjects; whom therefore he ought to cheriſh; for if they be waſted by unneceſſary Wars, or forced into other Countries by oppreſſion and unjuſt exactions, it proves the ruine of his Kingdom.

Ver. 29. He that is *ſlow to wrath,* is *of great underſtanding:* but he that is *haſty of ſpirit, exalteth folly.*] He declares himſelf to be a great man, and to abound with prudence, who is not ſoon provoked to anger by reproaches or ill uſage: by which if a man be haſtily inflamed, he expoſes his folly, and makes it apparent to every body.

Ver. 30. *A ſound heart is the life of the fleſh: but envy, the rottenneſs of the bones.*] There is nothing conduces more to health and happineſs, than a quiet, gentle, and contented mind; but envy, and ſuch-like fretful paſſions, is as miſerable a torment and conſuming diſeaſe, as rottenneſs in the bones.

Ver. 31. *He that oppreſſeth the poor, reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the poor.*] He that defrauds or oppreſſes the poor, forgets GOD, who can reduce him to the ſame condition; nay, affronts his Majeſty, who hath promiſed to be the Defender of ſuch helpleſs people: therefore whoſoever hath any reſpect to GOD, will be ſo far from injuring, that he will ſhew mercy and do good to him that is needy.

Ver. 32. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*] When a wicked man falls into calamity, his heart fails him, and he is driven away from all his confidents, like the chaff before the wind, by the conſciouſneſs of his own wickedneſs: but a righteous man is not diſmay'd in the greateſt dangers; but remains ſteady and confident, even in death it ſelf.

Ver. 33. *Wiſdom reſteth in the heart of him that hath underſtanding: but* that which is *in the midſt of fools, is made known.*] A prudent perſon makes no unſeaſonable demonſtration of his Wiſdom; but lets it lie quiet in his own mind, till there be a fitting opportunity to do good with it: whereas fools cannot contain themſelves, but preſently vent whatſoever they know, though never ſo ſmall, in every company whereinto they come.

Ver. 34. *Righteouſneſs exalteth a nation: but ſin is a reproach to any people.*] Juſtice and Piety raiſe a Nation to the higheſt degree of proſperity and glory, eſpecially when mercy, humanity and kindneſs, even unto ſtrangers and enemies, is joined with them: which pacifies the divine anger, and turns away many calamities; which the contrary ſins bring down upon a people, till they make them vile and miſerable. *See* Arg. [*l*].

Ver. 35. *The kings favour is toward a wiſe ſervant: but his wrath is* againſt *him that cauſeth ſhame.*] A prudent and dextrous Miniſter of State, who underſtands his buſineſs, and is faithful in it, muſt needs be very acceptable to his Prince: whoſe anger nothing more provokes, than one who regards not his Maſter's honour, but by his ill management, diſgraces his government, and brings all things into confuſion.

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins with that Aphoriſm, *which* [a] *the Lord* Bacon (Advancement of Learning, *B.* VIII. *Ch.* 2.) *hath ſet in the front of all thoſe, which he hath culled out of this Book; for an example of that ſort of wiſdom which is to be exerciſed in buſineſs, upon various occaſions. And he applies it particularly to a man's behaviour towards a Prince or other great Perſon, when he is angry with him.* "Two *things,* "*ſaith he,* Solomon *adviſes in this caſe: the* "*one is, that* an Anſwer be made; *the* "*other, that* it be ſoft. *The firſt of which* "*contains* three *precepts. Firſt, that you be-* "*ware of a ſad and ſullen ſilence, which* "*either charges the fault wholly upon your* "*ſelves; or impeaches your Maſter of injuſtice,* "*as if his ears were not open to a juſt defence.* "Secondly, *that you* beware of delaying the "Anſwer, *and of craving longer time for your* "*defence; becauſe that plainly betrays you are* "*deviſing ſome cunning and counterfeit Apology,* "*having no preſent Anſwer.* Thirdly, *that* "*by all means* an Anſwer be made: *an* An-"ſwer, *I ſay, not a mere* confeſſion or ſub-"miſſion; *but with ſome ſprinklings of an* "*excuſe let fall here and there. For it is not* "*ſafe to bear your ſelf otherways, unleſs you* "*have to deal with very generous and noble diſ-* "*poſitions, which are rare. But then, this* "*Anſwer (which is the ſecond and principal* "*thing here adviſed) muſt be very ſoft and tem-* "*perate, not harſh and peremptory: for that* "*will make the buſineſs worſe than if it had ne-* "*ver been meddled with at all; and increaſe* "*that wrath which you ſhould ſtudy to* "*appeaſe.*

Melanæthon *alſo, I find, in his ſhort Lectures upon this Book, commends this Leſſon very much to his Scholars: but looks upon it as a general precept for the preſervation of peace, and avoiding unneceſſary contentions; which ariſe out of pride, ambition, moroſity of nature, emulation, wrath, ſuperſtition; which move men either to give ill words, or to return worſe to thoſe that are given them; endeavouring to overcome by ſharpneſs and bitterneſs, not by lenity and moderation. And the truth is, the Hebrew word we tranſlate* Anſwer, *ſignifies as well what is firſt ſaid, as the reply to it. So that* Solomon *here gives this caution, that we ſhould not think it enough, not to begin ſtriſe and contention; but if others begin it, we ſhould not continue it by rough anſwers: but endeavour to make an end preſently, by mollifying the matter; and yield much for the common tranquillity's ſake. And he thinks it is a precept of the ſame nature, with that of* Pythagoras, Stir not up fire with a ſword: *and commends thoſe excellent verſes of* Euripides.

Δυοῖν λεγόντοιν, θατέρου θυμουμένου,
Ὁ μὴ ἀντιλέγων τοῖς λόγοις σοφώτερος.

And next to this precept he commends to his Scholars [b] *that in* v. 8. *which is all that he gloſſes upon in this Chapter: And thinks it is* a caution againſt reſting in ceremonious worſhip, without moral vertue. *Concerning which he ſays ſo many things, uſeful for theſe preſent times, that I cannot but here give the ſum of them.*

There are three *ſorts of works, ſaith he, mentioned by the Prophets, concerning* ceremonies, *and concerning* moral vertue, *and concerning* faith. *For the* firſt *of theſe,* ceremonies *or external ſigns;* GOD *inſtituted ſome for two cauſes.* Firſt, *that they ſhould be ſigns of the promiſes.* Secondly, *that they ſhould be the nerves of the publick Congregation: becauſe* GOD *would not have his Church be hid in obſcurity, but be conſpicuous and diſcerned from other nations,* voce & ceremoniis. *But here we muſt prudently conſider,*

ſider, how ceremonies are to be uſed; becauſe men are prone to falſe worſhip, and eſpecially to the abuſe of ceremonies: which they take for righteouſneſs, and think thereby to merit remiſſion of ſin: which perſwaſion ſpread it ſelf largely among mankind, in the heathen world, among the Phariſaical Jews, and in the Roman Church. Yet the wiſer heathen themſelves corrected this error, of truſting to ceremonies, without moral good works. Plato, *for inſtance, ſaith that* God loves Worſhippers, ὁ χρυσᾶ τιμῶντα, ἀλλ' ὁσιόν τε καὶ δίκαιον, not that can artificially complement him with geſtures and outward ſhows; but that in truth, honour and vertue. *But the Scripture goes a great deal further; and teaches us alſo to add* faith in God, and in our Lord Jesus Christ. Moral good works *will pleaſe* God, *when done for this end; not that we may merit thereby remiſſion of ſin; but that we may be obedient to* God, *and teach others to know him, and to celebrate him. And then alſo* ceremonies, *inſtituted by* God, *are pleaſing to him, when they are done for this end, not to merit remiſſion: but becauſe they are ſigns admoniſhing us of the promiſes, to ſtir up our faith; and likewiſe becauſe they are* ſigna confeſſionis, *ſigns of what Religion we profeſs; and* laſtly, quia ſunt nervi congregationis, *becauſe they are the nerves whereby the Congregation of Chriſtian people are joined together, and preſerved in unity. Theſe true ends, ſaith he, ought to be underſtood by the Church, and impious opinions to be removed. And for ſuch good ends, one would think none ſhould queſtion, much leſs quarrel with thoſe few Ceremonies, which our Church hath appointed in* God's *ſervice.*

That this was his opinion alſo, appears in his Commentaries upon the Fiftieth Pſalm: *where he ſaith, that* even humane Ceremonies are, in ſome ſort, the nerves of diſcipline; *and condemns only thoſe that make them effectual for the remiſſion of ſin. But his mind is delivered moſt fully, in a diſcourſe which I find in the Second Volume of his Works, concerning* the method of preaching: *where he directs Preachers to tell the people in general, that* all Ceremonies are not to be aboliſhed; *as appears by this, that then we muſt take away* Baptiſm *and the* Euchariſt. *And if any one ask, what muſt be done with Ceremonies inſtituted by man, he anſwers:* ſome of them are neceſſary, *and therefore muſt be retained; as certain days, in which the word of* God *is taught; and certain rites in the Church, ſuch as that of ſinging Pſalms; and certain forms of communicating,* &c.

But there are others not ſo neceſſary, what muſt be done with them? muſt they be tolerated? he anſwers, yes; if they be not impious, and if they be uſeful; either becauſe they commend Religion to the Vulgar, or they are inſtructive to Children, for whoſe ſake they were chiefly inſtituted. N. B. For we ſee in ſome Churches, where there are no Ceremonies left but only the Sacraments, that Religion was never ſo contemptible as it is now. *For there is need of external ſhow, which may commend Religion to the Vulgar, and make it appear more venerable; becauſe they cannot of themſelves ſee its magnitude and dignity.*

It is impious alſo, *he reſolves,* to think that all Ceremonies were inſtituted by wicked Popes. *No, there were ſome prudent and holy men, who perceived how ſupine and dull the minds of the vulgar were; that they would never be ſenſible of the dignity and amplitude of Religion, unleſs their minds were both awakned and detained by ſome reverend ſolemn Ceremonies; which might help to lift them up, and teach them to admire it.*

Theſe are his Reaſons why all Ceremonies ought not to be aboliſhed, becauſe ſome are commanded; others neceſſary; and others, that are not, have no impiety in them, and are very profitable for weaker minds. Which I thought good here to inſert; becauſe the opinion of ſo great and wiſe a Reformer, *may weigh much with ſome perſons who have little regard to us.*

I have been ſo long in this, that I muſt but briefly mention two *verſes more: upon which the before-named Lord* Bacon *hath given ſome touches.*

[c] *The firſt is* v. 15. *where by* a merry heart *he underſtands a good Conſcience* (Adv. of Learn. *B. VII. Ch.* 1.) *and thus gloſſes.* A mind conſcious of good intentions, though ſucceſs be wanting, affords truer and purer joy, and to nature more agreeable, than all that this world can furniſh a man withal, either for the enjoyment of his deſires, or the repoſe of his mind. *The words indeed of* Solomon *ſeem to be larger, and to extend unto all that are void of care, anxiety and ſorrow; but this is a pious ſenſe, and may well be comprehended in them.*

[d] *The other place is* v. 19. *the beginning of it: where he hath inlarged the ſenſe further, than I have done in my Paraphraſe (and the words will bear it) to this purpoſe, that* ſloth in the concluſion, proves laborious. " *For diligence* " *and ſedulous preparation levels the way we* " *are to go in any buſineſs; and removes im-* " *pediments in our paſſage. But he that is* " *ſlothful, and puts off all to the laſt point of* " *execution, muſt needs perpetually, at every* " *ſtep, paſs as it were through briars and* " *thorns; which ever and anon intangle, detain* " *and binder him in his proceedings. The ſame* " *obſervation may be made concerning the Go-* " *vernment of a Family, wherein if there be due* " *care and providence uſed, all goes on cheer-* " *fully; and as it were of its own accord, with-* " *out noiſe or tumult: but if thoſe be wanting,* " *when ſome greater occaſion falls out, all mat-* " *ters throng in to be diſpatched at once; the* " *Servants are in an uproar, the whole houſe* " *rings, and there is nothing well done in that* " *confuſion.*

[e] *The two verſes before this ſome have connected; but there is no neceſſity of it; though it be a great truth, that* paſſionate men are apt to make diſturbance even at feaſts; which men of temperate ſpirits endeavour to appeaſe, tho' affronts be offered them. *According to that excellent advice of* Seneca, Let diſſention begin from others, but reconciliation from thee. *It is there obſerved by* Bochartus (*L. II.* de Animalibus Sacris, *Cap.* 32. *Part* 1.) *that* herbs, *or as ſome tranſlate it,* green pottage, *was the pooreſt; and an Ox put up into a ſtall and there fatted (or as the* Talmudiſts *underſtand the phraſe,* a crammed Ox) *the nobleſt entertain-*

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ment in those Countries. For it is reckoned among the provision made for the tables of Solomon *and* Nehemiah; *and in the New Testament, the Marriage provision which the King made at his Son's Wedding were* oxen and fatlings, *XXI.* Matth. 4. *and the* fatted calf *was brought forth to entertain the returning Prodigal. And thus it was in other Countries, as he observes out of* Dioscorides; *who notes that* Homer *never sets any other cheer before his* Heroes *but this; no, not at Marriages or any other meeting: though he introduces* Agamemnon *often treating the Princes of* Greece.

1. *A Soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*] A mild, submissive and yielding answer, to him who severely chides, pacifies wrath; and prevents the further progress of it: but sharp, contemptuous and sawcy language incenses it more, or raises a passion, where there was none before. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*] A wise man gives profitable instructions; and understands also how to speak so seasonably and prudently, that it shall make the knowledge he imparts, both acceptable and useful: whereas fools have nothing but silly stuff to utter; or pour out their thoughts so indiscreetly and confusedly, that they only serve abundantly to declare their folly.

Ver. 3. *The eyes of the* LORD *are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*] There is nothing either in heaven or earth that can escape the knowledge of GOD: who is every where; and observes the most secret motions and actions of men, both good and bad.

Ver. 4. *A wholsome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.*] He that skilfully employs his tongue to give wholsome instructions, especially to heal differences and make peace, is an incomparable blessing to the place where he lives, and makes it a paradise: But he that abuses his tongue, to poison men with ill principles, to lye, to calumniate, to make bates, doth most miserably disturb mankind, and (like a blighting wind) blasts all the comforts of their life.

Ver. 5. *A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof, is prudent.*] He that regards not, or rejects the instruction of his Father, or Tutor, or other Superiour, whose Love is equal to his Authority, will always be a fool: But he that is willing to receive even rebukes, from whomsoever they come, and carefully observe them, hath already attained a great degree of wisdom; and prudently consults his own welfare and happiness.

Ver. 6. *In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.*] A truly just and merciful man is very rich, whether he hath little or much; because he is well contented, and what he hath is likely to continue in his family: but there is much disquiet and trouble in the greatest revenues of the wicked; which can neither stay long with him, nor give him satisfaction while he enjoys them.

Ver. 7. *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish* doth *not so.*] Wise and good men are neither envious nor sparing of their pains to disperse their knowledge, which they freely communicate, and diligently propagate unto others: but evil men are such fools, that either they have nothing to impart, or no heart to do any good with what they have.

Ver. 8. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the* LORD: *but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*] It is impious to think to please GOD, with mere gifts and sacrifices; which when they are presented from wicked men, who have no thought of amending their lives, are abominable to the Divine Majesty: but the very prayers of upright men, though they are not able to bring him any costly offerings, are exceeding acceptable, and prevail for great blessings from him. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 9. *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the* LORD: *but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.*] For the whole way of a wicked man, his designs, contrivances, and course of life, are all odious and abominable to the LORD; which make even his sacrifices no better: but he loves him, whose thoughts, affections, and endeavours, are earnestly bent to an unwearied pursuit of piety and vertue.

Ver. 10. *Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.*] Sharp and grievous punishments shall be inflicted on him that forsakes the vertuous path, in which he began to tread: for he is not easily reclaimed; because it is unpleasing to him to hear of his faults; and in time he hates reproof, and then must certainly perish.

Ver. 11. *Hell and destruction are before the* LORD: *how much more then the hearts of the children of men?*] The LORD is perfectly acquainted with things most hidden and secret to us; with the grave, the infernal places, and things perished and quite consumed: how much more therefore with the souls of all men living upon earth, if they have but so much as an intention, or inclination to depart from him?

Ver. 12. *A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.*] A prophane man, who makes a mock of GOD and of Religion, loves not to argue with himself about such matters, and hates those that reprove him: which makes him avoid the acquaintance and society of wise and vertuous men, for fear he should meet with their reprehension.

Ver. 13. *A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*] When the mind of a man is inwardly satisfied and full of joy, it doth good to his body too; as appears in his cheerful countenance: But when grief and sorrow seizes on the heart, it dejects, infeebles and breaks the most courageous spirit.

Ver. 14. *The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.*] An intelligent man, who is heartily in love with wisdom, greedily seeks for solid knowledge: but men void of understanding gape after, and relish nothing but frivolous, vain and unprofitable things; which are like meat and drink unto them.

Ver. 15. *All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.*] All the days of a poor man are full of

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anxiety and trouble; eſpecially if, when any affliction befalls him, he be diſcontented with his condition, and cannot bear with diſappointments: but a good heart, and cheerful ſpirit is a cure for this; eſpecially, a mind conſcious to it ſelf of deſigning well, whatſoever the ſucceſs prove, is a perpetual comfort, and a higher ſatisfaction, than the moſt delicious banquet of the rich and proſperous. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 16. *Better* is *little with the fear of the* LORD, *than great treaſure, and trouble therewith.*] A ſmall eſtate with the fear of offending the Divine Majeſty by diſcontent, or any other ſin, is much better than vaſt Treaſures with diſquiet and confuſion of thoughts; which (without a religious ſenſe of GOD) are wont to attend upon abundance of wealth.

Ver. 17. *Better* is *a dinner of herbs where love is, than a ſtalled ox, and hatred therewith.*] The meaneſt fare, with the love of him that invites, and with agreement among the Gueſts, is much better than the moſt ſumptuous entertainment of him that hates us; or among thoſe that quarrel and contend, even then when all differences ſhould be forgotten. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 18. *A wrathful man ſtirreth up ſtrife: but* he that is *ſlow to anger appeaſeth ſtrife.*] A man prone to wrath will eaſily diſturb the moſt peaceable company, being apt to quarrel for very trifles: but a meek and patient perſon is ſo far from raiſing ſtrife, that he will endeavour to compoſe it, when he finds it is begun by others.

Ver. 19. *The way of the ſlothful* man is *as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous* is *made plain.*] A ſlothful man, when he hath any thing to do, feigns to himſelf moſt grievous difficulties, which he fancies, or pretends are impoſſible to be overcome: but thoſe very things ſeem eaſie to the induſtry of honeſt-hearted men; who go on ſmoothly in their buſineſs, and conquer all impediments. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 20. *A wiſe ſon maketh a glad father: but a fooliſh man deſpiſeth his mother.*] A pious Son (as hath been ſaid before, X. 1. and cannot be repeated too often) is a great joy to his Parents; eſpecially to his Father, who hopes he will ſupport his Name and Family: but a wicked man is as great a grief unto them; eſpecially to his Mother (whoſe indulgence perhaps makes him more irreverent towards her) when he bears no regard to her; nay, deſpiſes her commands and admonitions, and makes her contemptible unto others.

Ver. 21. *Folly* is *joy to* him that is *deſtitute of wiſdom: but a man of underſtanding walketh uprightly.*] It is a pleaſure (as was alſo ſaid before X. 23.) to a man void of conſideration, to do the moſt abſurd and wicked things: but he that underſtands himſelf, not only directs his thoughts, and takes the greateſt care to live orderly and regularly; but feels it to be his higheſt ſatisfaction.

Ver. 22. *Without counſel, purpoſes are diſappointed: but in the multitude of counſellors they are eſtabliſhed.*] The neceſſity likewiſe of prudent Counſellors is fit again to be repeated (XI. 14.) for if they be wanting, the beſt deſigns are likely to miſcarry: but where there are a multitude of wiſe and vertuous men conſulting for the publick good, they will eaſily compaſs any thing; by foreſeeing all difficulties, and providing againſt them.

Ver. 23. *A man hath joy by the anſwer of his mouth: and a word* ſpoken *in due ſeaſon, how good* is it?] And it is a great pleaſure to a man to give wholeſome counſel; and a greater to ſee the good ſucceſs of it: but the greateſt of all (an inexpreſſible pleaſure) both to himſelf and others, to have given it ſo ſeaſonably, that a buſineſs was eaſily effected by it, which had not been done without it.

Ver. 24. *The way of life* is *above to the wiſe, that he may depart from hell beneath.*] The way to be perfectly happy, a truly wiſe man ſees, is to raiſe his thoughts, deſires and hopes above this earth, and to have reſpect to GOD in all his actions: which will make him truly noble and great; and preſerve him both from all mean and baſe practices, and from the moſt horrid dangers here, and utter deſtruction hereafter.

Ver. 25. *The* LORD *will deſtroy the houſe of the proud: but he will eſtabliſh the border of the widow.*] Truſt not in riches and power, but in the great LORD of the world, who poſſeſſes and diſpoſes all things; for he will overturn the Family of haughty men (who forgetting him, trample upon their inferiours) though never ſo ſtrongly ſupported: but will preſerve the poor Widow, who hath no helper, in her right; when ſuch inſolent perſons invade it.

Ver. 26. *The thoughts of the wicked* are *an abomination to the* LORD: *but* the words *of the pure* are *pleaſant words.*] For the LORD abhors all wicked deſigns, and miſchievous contrivances: but the kind conſultations and diſcourſes of ſuch as ſeek the welfare and comfort of others, are no leſs pleaſing to him than they are pure.

Ver. 27. *He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own houſe; but he that hateth gifts ſhall live.*] He that is ſo greedy of money, that he cares not how he gets it, inſtead of raiſing his Family, confounds it: but he that hateth bribes, and all unlawful ways of gain, ſhall proſper, and continue it.

Ver. 28. *The heart of the righteous ſtudieth to anſwer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.*] A good man thinks it is ſoon enough to ſpeak, when he is askt about a buſineſs; and deliberates within himſelf to ſpeak nothing that is not to the purpoſe: but bad men are raſh, and forward to utter their mind; and generally do more hurt than good.

Ver. 29. *The* LORD *is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.*] The LORD is far from giving any regard to the wicked, whoſe buſineſs it is to do evil, though they implore his favour: but ſends good men help, when they pray unto him, as readily as they were wont to ſend relief to others.

Ver. 30. *The light of the eyes rejoyceth the heart:* and *a good report maketh the bones fat.*] It is a wonderful pleaſure to behold all the beautiful works of GOD, which preſent themſelves to our eyes: But nothing gives ſuch intimate ſatisfaction, and makes a man ſo cheerful in well-doing, as to hear a fair report of his own honeſt actions; or to receive the good news of the well-doing of other vertuous men.

Ver. 31.

Ver. 31. *The ear that heareth the reproof of life, abideth among the wise.*] He that lends an attentive ear to wholsome reproof, and is obedient to it, is to be numbered among the wise; and shall at last be able to give good instructions unto others.

Ver. 32. *He that refuseth instruction, despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof, getteth understanding.*] And whosoever he be that refuseth, much more that contemneth, such instructions and reproofs, he sets his own Soul at naught; and despiseth the means of safety: but he that diligently hearkens to it, knows what's good for himself; and keeps his Soul from being lost for want of understanding.

Ver. 33. *The fear of the* LORD *is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.*] A brief Institution of Wisdom and Vertue is this, to have an awful sense of GOD; with a devout affection to him, and fear to offend him: And as this is the best disposition for Wisdom; so humility, and patient submission, in a low condition, is the best preparation for honour and preferment.

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a most necessary observation, which a good man ought always to have in his mind (for which cause it is repeated: with little difference, twice more in this Chapter, v. 9, 33. and again Chap. XIX. 21.) the sense of which our Translation seems to have missed. For it ascribes both the* Preparation of the heart, *and* the Answer of the tongue, *unto the* LORD *(which is true in this regard, that without him we can do nothing) whereas the* Hebrew *words run plainly thus,* Man hath the disposing of the heart, *he may, with* GOD's *leave and common assistance, intend, propound, resolve within himself, what he will say and do; but that he shall be able to utter things in that order he hath premeditated; or, if he be able, shall attain the end of his deliberation, and eloquent speech, is more than he can undertake; for* that is as the LORD pleaseth. *This seems to me to be better opened by* Melancthon *than any one I have read. Who truly observes, that such sayings as these do not take away the liberty of man's will or choice; but only shew, that even the best men sometimes err in their choice; and that the success doth not always answer. For we must diligently distinguish, saith he, between our election and the success: and remember that we need a double help of* GOD, *for the making a happy choice: One of* judging right; *and the other afterward, of* governing events. *For unless our judgments be ruled right, many errors happen; as we see in* Josiah, Zedekiah, Demosthenes, Pompey, Cicero; *who all erred* in eligendo bello *in their resolves about war; and direful events followed. And sometime also when the mind doth not err in its judgment; yet* GOD *is not pleased to assist the action, for other causes. As in the War against the* Benjamites, *which miscarried a great while, because the* Israelites *trusted in their own strength. We must always therefore be sensible, that happy events do not depend merely on humane forecast, diligence and power, as* Jeremiah *speaks,* I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, *i. e. he cannot have what success he will; but must be beholden to* GOD *for his happiness. This our weakness* GOD *would have us to acknowledge, and to fear and depend on him; as it follows here,* v. 3. Commit thy work unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. *To this use we ought to accommodate such sayings as these, not to a Stoical opinion of necessity. Thus he.*

[b] *And he no less worthily glosses upon the common Interpretation of* v. 4. *the latter part of which hath exercised many Pens to little purpose: when the sense is clear, though no expositor, that I have seen, hath hit upon it,* viz. *that* GOD makes some use of wicked men, as well as of all things else; *which they shall serve whether they will or no. For he* disposes *(so the word we translate* hath made *is to be understood; not of his* creating *things) all things correspondent to his own will and pleasure, which they all obey.* So lammaanthu *seems to be best translated, not* for himself, *but* according to his will. *However, I have included the other interpretation also in my Paraphrase; but applied* the day of evil *not to the punishment which he inflicts upon the wicked for their sins; but which he orders them to inflict upon others, when their iniquities are ripe for his vengeance. For it is the method of his Providence, to direct the ambition, wrath, hatred, revenge, &c. which he sees in some wicked mans hearts, to vent themselves there, where it will do service to him. Who wisely and justly makes some wicked men do execution upon others like themselves. This seems to me the most easie and natural sense of the words; which were remarkably fulfilled in the destruction of* Jerusalem *by the* Roman *Soldiers, whom our Saviour used to punish his crucifiers. Not that they undertook that War, out of any design or desire to do our blessed Saviour right; but out of an ambition to inslave the World:* ἐγκρατὴς αὐτῶν ἐφιέμενος εἶναι διὰ πάντων, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐσχάτων ἀρξάμενος, yet GOD made use of them for another design, as publick executioners, by whom he punished the ungodly, *as* Theodoret *speaks upon LXXIV.* Psal. 3.

[c] *I must omit* Melancthon's *glosses upon this Verse, and the two next; that I may have room for his pertinent observation upon* v. 10. A divine sentence is in the lips of the King, *&c.* "These words, says he, affirm the whole political order, Magistrates, Laws, Distinction "of Dominions, Contracts, Judgments, Punishments, *to be things ordained by the Wisdom of* GOD *among men. And since we know* "political order *to be the work of* GOD, *we* "ought to love it, and study to defend it; and "modestly for GOD's sake obey it; and give "thanks to GOD *who preserves it; and look* "upon those horrible furies of the devil and men, "who disturb this order, *to be displeasing to* "GOD: *as this whole Doctrine is explained,* "Rom. XIII. But what is this divine Sentence *which is in the King's lips?* It is the "Laws, says he; and Judgments according "to the Laws: *and besides,* GOD *hath armed* "Kings *with a power* to make Laws of their "own, *not repugnant to his Laws; but built* "upon them, either by demonstrations, or pro-

" bable reaſons. God ſometimes moves the mind " of Kings alſo, and gives them ſingular motions " (as other excellent Artificers have) becauſe " he will by that means ſave mankind, &c. " Thus it was a ſingular motion in Solomon's " reaſoning about the true Mother of the Child. " And in the judgment of Gonzaga in the laſt " age, upon the Spaniſh Governor of Milan " under him. Who having held a Noble perſon " Captive a long time, would not deliver him " to his Wife (when ſhe petition'd and offered a " a large ſum of money for his redemption) un- " leſs he might lie with her; and after he had " obtained his deſire, then cauſed her husband to " be killed, and delivered him dead to her. " Which when Gonzaga heard, and had exa- " mined, he compelled him to marry this woman; " and as ſoon as he had done that, he condem- " ned him to be immediately beheaded, and gave " her all his eſtate.

But we are not from ſuch places as this to inferr, that Kings cannot give a wrong judgment: tho' this be as good a concluſion as from thoſe words, the Prieſt's lips ſhall preſerve knowledge, *to conclude the Pope cannot err. Kings from this place of* Solomon *may as well pretend to Infallibility, as Prieſts from that place of* Malachi. *Nay, if we reſpect either the form of this precept, or the plenitude of* God's *promiſe for ability to perform it, we muſt confeſs, this place is more plain and peremptory for Kings, than any can be brought for the High-Prieſt's Infallibility, in giving definitive ſentence. And yet all the places (as a famous Divine of our own ſpeaks,* Dr. Jackſon, *B. III. upon the Creed,* Chap. 12.) *that can be brought either for the King's or the Prieſt's Authority, rather ſhew what manner of men they ſhould be, both in life and judgment; than aſſure them of any infallibility of judgment, if they be diſſolute in life, and regard not the Laws of* God. *This was a thing never dreamt of by any, till the notoriouſly infamous lives of Popes diſcredited the titles of Sanctity and Infallibility (which from the conceit of their predeceſſors integrity they had uſurped) and inforced their flatterers to frame a diſtinction of Sanctity in Doctrine, ſeparated from Sanctity of Life.*

I thought it not amiſs to ſay thus much upon this ſubject, becauſe I find even Maldonate *himſelf in his notes upon this place, hath the confidence to conclude the Pope muſt needs have this privilege, which is promiſed to Kings: when, it is apparent, Kings are not infallible; and conſequently, by his own reaſoning, Popes cannot be ſo.*

There are other notable ſentences which would deſerve a larger gloſs than I have given in this Paraphraſe; which I muſt paſs by: becauſe this Preface is already prolonged to a great length.

[d] *I ſhall only therefore mention two. One* v. 21. *where* Wiſdom *and* Eloquence *are compared together. The former of which, no doubt, is of greateſt value, as we ſee in thoſe words of* God *to* Moſes, *when he diſabled himſelf for the ſervice impoſed upon him, for want of the other faculty;* There is Aaron, *ſaith the Text,* he ſhall be thy ſpeaker, and thou ſhalt be to him as God. *Yet in profit, and popular eſteem Wiſdom gives place to Eloquence; according to the vulgar Tranſlation of this verſe,* Sapiens corde appellatur prudens, ſed dulcis Eloquia majora reperiet. *Signifying, ſays the Lord* Bacon (Adv. of Learning, *Book VI. Ch.* 3.) *not obſcurely, that* profoundneſs of wiſdom may help men to fame and admiration: But it is Eloquence which prevails in buſineſs and active life.

[e] *The other is* v. 26. *where I have put two ſenſes together, according to the different acceptions of the Hebrew word* Amal; *which ſignifies either to take pains one's ſelf, or to moleſt others. But I can ſee no reaſon why* Maldonate *ſhould favour the LXX Tranſlation; who, againſt the ſtream of all other Interpreters, apply theſe words to an ungodly man's* digging up evil *to himſelf, as if the meaning were,* he digs a pit for himſelf, and the words he ſpeaks are the cauſe of his puniſhment, as if he were burnt: *unleſs it proceeded from his fondneſs for the* Spaniſh Inquiſition, *which he was deſirous to introduce every where. The very beſt of them, it appears by him (who was one of the moſt learned and judicious Interpreters in the Romiſh Church) are moſt devoutly bent to our deſtruction: For he cannot forbear here to alledge that Inquiſition as a proof of* Solomon's *words,* Id exemplo Inquiſitionis Hiſpanicæ perſpicuum eſt, *&c.* This is apparent by the example of the Spaniſh Inquiſition; whereby he that ſpeaks any thing raſhly againſt the faith, is deſervedly delivered to the fire; which I WISH WERE DONE EVERY WHERE. *Thus in the moſt literal ſenſe, this Jeſuit's lips are as a burning fire; in which he would have us not only ſinged, but devoured: in purſuance of this Maxim of* Solomon. *Which others honeſtly interpret of thoſe calumnies, diſcords, ſeditions, which evil men raiſe by their tongues, to the deſtruction of their neighbours. For ſo it follows* v. 28. A froward man ſoweth ſtrife, *&c.*

1. *THE preparations of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the tongue, is from the* Lord.] Men may deliberate, and contrive, and order in their mind, what, and in what manner and method they will ſpeak: but whether they ſhall perſwade, and prevail or no for ſuch an Anſwer as they expect, nay, be able to deliver themſelves with ſuch elocution as they imagine, cannot be reſolved by them; but depends upon the pleaſure of the Lord. *See* Arg. [a].

Ver. 2. *All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the* Lord *weigheth the ſpirits.*] Such is the blindneſs of ſelf-love, that men can find no fault in themſelves; but imagine all that they contrive and do, to be free from blame; which, when the Lord examines, who ſearches into the very intentions of mens hearts, is found to be very defective, if not vicious.

Ver. 3. *Commit thy works unto the* Lord, *and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed.*] When thou undertakeſt any thing, implore the Divine bleſſing; and committing the ſucceſs of it to God's Providence, leave it to him to give what iſſue to it he pleaſes: which is the ſureſt way to have thy honeſt deſigns accompliſhed.

Ver. 4. *The* Lord *hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*] The Lord diſpoſeth all things throughout the world, to ſerve ſuch ends, as he thinks fit to deſign; which they cannot refuſe to comply withal: For if any men be ſo wicked as to

oppoſe

oppoſe his Will, he will not loſe their ſervice; but when he brings a publick calamity upon a Country, employ them to be the executioners of his wrath. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 5. *Every one that is proud in heart*, is *an abomination to the* LORD: though *hand* join *in hand, he ſhall not be unpuniſhed.*] There is no man ſo great, but if his mind grow lofty and arrogant, forgetting GOD, and inſolently oppreſſing his neighbour, he is hateful beyond all expreſſion unto the LORD: who will take vengeance on him, and pull him down, though he make never ſo ſtrong confederacies to ſupport himſelf; for if he avoid one puniſhment, another ſhall overtake him; nay, his wickedneſs ſhall purſue him from generation to generation, (XI. 21.)

Ver. 6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the* LORD, men *depart from evil.*] The moſt effectual means to appeaſe mens anger for private offences, or to divert the anger of GOD in publick calamities, is to exerciſe mercy and loving-kindneſs, with juſtice and faithful performance of promiſes: eſpecially when they proceed from an awful regard to GOD, and Religious dread of his diſpleaſure; which will make a man careful to decline every thing that is evil, and thereby eſcape the puniſhment that attends upon it.

Ver. 7. *When a man's ways pleaſe the* LORD, *he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*] The beſt way to have our enemies reconciled unto us, is for us firſt to be reconciled unto GOD: for ſuch is the reverence men bear to Vertue, and ſuch is the love which the LORD hath to vertuous perſons, that when all their deſigns and actions are ſuch as he approves; He inclines even thoſe that were their foes, to become their friends.

Ver. 8. *Better* is *a little with righteouſneſs, then great revenues without right.*] A ſmall eſtate honeſtly gotten, and charitably enjoyed, is much to be preferred before vaſt incomes heaped up by oppreſſion, and kept without hoſpitality.

Ver. 9. *A man's heart deviſeth his way: but the* LORD *directeth his ſteps.*] The mind of man deſigns an end, and contrives what means to uſe, and reckons perhaps what ſucceſs they will have: but the LORD determines what the event ſhall be, and orders his motions perhaps to ſuch an iſſue, as never came into his thoughts.

Ver. 10. *A divine ſentence* is *in the lips of the king: his mouth tranſgreſſeth not in judgment.*] GOD is preſent in a ſingular manner unto a pious King, inſpiring his mind to divine ſagaciouſly in dubious and obſcure things; that his reſolutions and decrees may be received like Oracles; and all cauſes be decided by him ſo juſtly and exactly, that no man be wrong'd in the judgment which he paſſes. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 11. *A juſt weight and balance* are *the* LORD's: *all the weights of the bag* are *his work.*] And it is worthy of his care, that there be no corruption in private, no more than in publick juſtice; for it alſo is of divine Inſtitution; the great LORD of all requiring juſt and equal dealings in all our commerce one with another; which he hath ordained ſhould be managed with ſcrupulous integrity, in the ſmalleſt, as well as in the greateſt matters.

Ver. 12. It is *an abomination to kings to commit wickedneſs: for the throne is eſtabliſhed by righteouſneſs.*] It is not enough to good Kings that they do no injury; but they abominate, with the higheſt deteſtation, all oppreſſion, cruelty, extortion, *&c.* not only in themſelves, but in others; for they know that Juſtice, Mercy, and true Religion, ſupport their Authority, and make their Kingdoms durable.

Ver. 13. *Righteous lips* are *the delight of kings: and they love him that ſpeaketh right.*] And calumniators or flatterers find no acceptance with ſuch Princes; but they delight in thoſe that will not deceive them by falſe, unjuſt, and malicious informations; and make him their favourite, who deals ſincerely and tells them the truth, though it may ſeem ungrateful to them.

Ver. 14. *The wrath of a king* is as *meſſengers of death: but a wiſe man will pacifie it.*] The wrath of a king ſtrikes ſuch terror into him, with whom he is offended, as if the ſentence of death were pronounced againſt him: but, as ill men and fools exaſperate it more, ſo a vertuous and prudent Courtier appeaſes his anger, and makes a reconciliation.

Ver. 15. *In the light of the king's countenance* is *life, and his favour* is *as a cloud of the latter rain.*] And when a King will be pleaſed to look graciouſly upon a man, eſpecially after he hath been incenſed againſt him, it not only revives, but gives him the greateſt joy; for from his favour he promiſes himſelf all manner of happineſs; as a plentiful harveſt follows the ſhowers of rain, which, in the ſpring, refreſh the Corn.

Ver. 16. *How much better* is it *to get wiſdom, then gold? and to get underſtanding, rather to be choſen then ſilver?*] But after all is done, to get ſo much wiſdom as to know the difference between good and evil, and to underſtand how to behave a man's ſelf upon all occaſions; is, beyond all expreſſion, better and more to be choſen, than the greateſt treaſures of gold and ſilver, which either the favour of Princes can give, or his own induſtry acquire.

Ver. 17. *The high way of the upright* is *to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way, preſerveth his ſoul.*] This is the conſtant aim and endeavour of upright men, the beaten path, as we may call it, in which they travel to decline every thing that is evil: and he who makes this his care, looking well to all his actions, that he do nothing amiſs, looks well to himſelf, and preſerves his ſoul and body from deſtruction.

Ver. 18. *Pride* goeth *before deſtruction: and an haughty ſpirit before a fall.*] Inſolent behaviour is the forerunner of utter deſtruction: and when men lift up themſelves in their own thoughts, and over-look all others with contempt, they are in the greateſt danger to ſtumble; and not to ſee that, which will give them ſuch a grievous downfal, as will break them all to ſhivers.

Ver. 19. *Better* it is to be *of an humble ſpirit with the lowly, then to divide the ſpoil with the proud.*] Therefore it is much better to ſubmit to the meaneſt condition, nay, patiently to bear injuries, with afflicted, but meek and lowly perſons, than to lift up one's ſelf to the prejudice of others, and by trampling upon them to partake with the proud in their rapine and ſpoil.

Ver. 20.

Ver. 20. *He that handleth a matter wisely, shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the* LORD, *happy is he.*] He that understands his business thoroughly, and manages it prudently and discreetly, is likely to have good success: but none so happy, none so sure of prospering in his design, as he that confides more in the LORD, than in his own skill and industry.

Ver. 21. *The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.*] He whose mind is well furnished with wisdom, cannot but win a great reputation; and be highly esteemed for his prudent counsels and resolutions: but if he have the powerful charms of Eloquence also, to convey his mind delightfully unto others, it will add a greater value to his wisdom; and make it more diffusive and instructive unto the world. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 22. *Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.*] A clear understanding and right judgment of things, like an inexhaustible spring, gives perpetual comfort and satisfaction to him in whom it is; and makes him very useful unto others: but the learning of fools is frivolous and vain; and therefore, if they undertake to instruct others, they only make them like themselves.

Ver. 23. *The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.*] The Mind of a wise man instructs him to speak judiciously and pertinently: and makes him not only communicate his thoughts to others, but with such weight of reason as increases their learning.

Ver. 24. *Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.*] Especially when he can deliver his mind in pleasing and delightful words, flowing from him with a natural Eloquence, as honey drops from the comb: which ravish the affections, and touch a man's heart to the very quick; when he needs either comfort or cure for any inward disease wherewith he labours.

Ver. 25. *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.*] But there is never more need of caution, than when we hear a moving Orator; therefore this instruction may be here necessary to be repeated (*XIV.* 12.) examine every thing strictly and impartially; and be not led away merely by thy fancy, and thy appetite: for they make many things seem innocent, which in themselves, and in the issue, are deadly and destructive.

Ver. 26. *He that laboureth, laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.*] It is a powerful motive to a man to take pains in an honest employment, that all his labour is for his own preservation; his mouth begging this favour of him, that he may not starve: and on the contrary, he that spends his time in giving trouble and vexation unto others, will find it fall upon himself; for he cannot speak so much as an evil word, but it will return upon him, and fly back in his own face. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 27. *An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.*] And it is not a little pains that an ungodly lawless man takes, to plot and devise mischief; wherein he labours, as if he was digging for a treasure; and one way is, to brand his neighbour with false reports and slanders, and thereby utterly destroy his reputation.

Ver. 28. *A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*] Others of them have such a perverseness in their spirit, that it is their business to disturb the world, and raise dissentions among those that would live in peace; by backbiting, detracting, and whispering false stories: making a breach even between Princes and people, husband and wife, nay, the dearest friends and familiars, if they hearken to their tales.

Ver. 29. *A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.*] Another sort live by rapine and open violence; who are not content to do wrong themselves, but perswade others to enter into their society; and then lead them into the most pernicious courses.

Ver. 30. *He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things; moving his lips, he bringeth evil to pass.*] Which they do not fall into by chance; but with profound study contrive the ruin of others; and the sign being given, they furiously execute the mischief they have designed.

Ver. 31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*] Old age is very venerable, when a man's past life hath been truly vertuous and useful: which is the best way also to prolong one's days; and bring one to that great honour, which is due to those, who have long done much good to Mankind.

Ver. 32. *He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.*] He that can suppress the vehement motions of anger, deserves more praise than those mighty men who quell the enemies that oppose them; and he that hath power to govern all his own inclinations, affections and passions by reason, hath a nobler Empire than he that subdues Cities and Countries by force of Arms.

Ver. 33. *The lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposing thereof is of the* LORD.] Acknowledge the Divine Providence in all things, even in those which seem most casual: For though men cast the lots into the lap of a garment, or into a hollow vessel, and thence draw them out again; yet it is the LORD who directs entirely in what order they shall come forth, and so determines the matter in doubt, according to his pleasure.

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

In the first verse of this Chapter, the Wise man observes how happy that Family is, which lives in peace and perfect agreement one with another; though they have but a mean estate. And next to this how happy a thing it is, if there be but one wise and vertuous man in a Family (suppose he be but a Servant) when any dissentions and differences arise in it. For so the Lord Bacon (Advanc. of Learning, *Book VIII. Chap.* 2. *Parab.* 2.) *expounds the* [a] *second verse: whose words*

words I will ſet down, becauſe if they hit not the ſenſe compleatly, yet they very pithily expreſs a part of it, and carry in them a very important truth. " *In all troubled and diſagreeing Fami-*
" *lies, ſaith he, there is commonly ſome* Servant
" *or* gentle Friend, *who being powerful with*
" *both ſides, may moderate and compoſe the diſ-*
" *ferences that are among them. To whom, in*
" *that reſpect the whole houſe, and the Maſter*
" *himſelf are much engaged and beholden. This*
" *Servant, if he aim only at his own ends, the-*
" *riſhes and aggravates the diviſions of the Fa-*
" *mily: but if he be ſincerely faithful and up-*
" *right, certainly he deſerveth much; ſo as to*
" *be reckoned as one of the Brethren; or at leaſt*
" *to receive a fiduciary adminiſtration of the*
" *inheritance.*"

[b] *And after ſome other documents there follows a notable* rule for the making peace, *and ending all differences; whether between particular perſons in Families, or between Kingdoms,* v. 9. *upon which, the ſame great Perſon thus gloſſes* (ib. *Parab.* 27.) " *There are two ways of pro-*
" *ceeding to arbitrate diffenences and reconcile*
" *affections. The one begins with an act of obli-*
" *vion of what is paſt; the other begins with a*
" *repetition of wrongs, ſubjoyning apologies and*
" *excuſes. Now ſome think this laſt to be the*
" *only way; inſomuch, that I have heard a*
" *prudent perſon and great States-man lay down*
" *this Maxim,* He that treats of peace,
" without a recapitulation of the terms of
" difference, rather deceives mens minds
" with the ſweet name of agreement, than
" compoſes them by equity and moderation
" of right. *But* Solomon, *a wiſer man than*
" *he, is of a contrary opinion: approving an*
" *act of oblivion, and forbidding repetition. For*
" *in repetition, or renewing the memory of the*
" *cauſes of difference, there are theſe inconveni-*
" *ences: not only that it is, as we ſay,* unguis
" in ulcere, *raking in the ulcer, which very*
" *much exaſperates, but alſo indangers the breed-*
" *ing of new quarrels while they are debating*
" *the old (for the parties at difference will never*
" *accord about the terms of their falling out)*
" *and* laſtly, *in the iſſue it brings the matter*
" *to apologies: whereas both the one and the*
" *other party would ſeem rather to have remit-*
" *ted the offence, than to have admitted excuſes*
" *for it.*

Melanchthon *thinks this and the* three *next verſes* 10, 11, 12. *to be Sentences near of kin; all belonging to the right method in judging, which is comprehended in that ſaying of Chriſt's,* If thy Brother ſin againſt thee, tell him of it between thy ſelf and him: *And interprets this ninth verſe thus, (taking* Aluph *for a Prince, which we tranſlate* chief Friends) *He that orderly admoniſhes him that erreth, cures him, and makes no publick diſturbance; ſaves the man, and preſerves publick concord; but this order being neglected, thence ariſes out of brawlings, diſcords of Princes, wars and devaſtations.*

[c] *Now an evil man only ſeeks ſcoldings or contentions (as it follows,* v. 11.) i. e. *ſaith he, he doth not ſeek truth nor the good of the Church; but troubles without end. Thus* Cleon *and* Alcibiades *in the State, ſcattered ſeeds of war at* Athens: *the* Cynicks *and* Academicks *contradicted every body among the Philoſophers: and lately* Valla, Cornelius Agrippa, Caroloſtadius, *&c. had the like ſcalding natures. Theſe ſeek not truth; but contradict things rightly ſpoken, or wantonly move unneceſſary diſputes, and will not yield when they are admoniſhed, but with greater rage defend their errors. Of ſuch* Solomon *here ſaith in the next verſe,* it is better to meet a bear robbed of her whelps, than a fool in his folly. *An example of which we meet withal, when we meet with a* bewitched Papiſt, *who defends the moſt manifeſt errors. Thus he.*
But that which the Vulgar tranſlates ſemper jurgia quærit malus, *and we tranſlate,* an evil man ſeeks only rebellion, *the moſt and the beſt Interpreters, take the other way, as the words lie more naturally in the Hebrew,* a man very rebellious ſeeks nothing but miſchief: *which ſenſe I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe, together with the other.*

[d] *The truth of the next verſe* (v. 12.) *is admirably opened by* Bochartus (*L. III.* de Animal. Sacris, *Cap.* 9. *Part* 1.) *who obſerves* four *things concerning the* Bear, *out of good Authors. The* firſt *every one knows, that a* Bear *is an exceeding fierce Creature: the* ſecond *is, that the* Female *is more fierce than the* Male: *the* third, *that ſhe is more fierce than ordinary, when ſhe hath Whelps: and* laſtly, *that when ſhe is robbed of them ſhe is fierceſt of all,* immanem in modum, *even unto rage and madneſs. Which the Scripture takes notice of in two other places beſides this,* 2 Sam. *XVII.* 8. *XIII.* Hoſea 8. *where St.* Hierom *obſerves that the writers of natural Hiſtory ſay, among all wild Beaſts, none more fierce and cruel than the* Bear, *in two caſes eſpecially, when ſhe wants food, and when ſhe is robbed of her Whelps. The reaſon of this laſt is there given by* Kimchi; *which well enough agrees with the compariſon, which the Wiſe man here makes:* for a *Bear* cannot be more in love with her whelps, than a fool is with his abſurd opinions and reſolutions: *and as a* Bear *falls upon the next perſon ſhe meets withal, taking him for the robber; ſo doth a fool upon every one that ſtands in his way, though he be never ſo much obliged to them. He ſpares none in the heat of his paſſions, but furiouſly abuſeth them,* &c.

[e] *Unto what is expreſſed in the Paraphraſe upon* v. 17. *concerning a* Brother being born for Adverſity (*which I have referred, as the beſt Interpreters do, unto a* Friend) *this may be added, as the plaineſt tranſlation of the Hebrew words.* A true Friend (*ſpoken of before*) is born (*that is,* becomes) *a* Brother in Adverſity. *He was a Friend before; this makes him a Brother: and ſo he is to be eſteemed.*

[f] *There is a phraſe in the nineteenth verſe,* exalteth his gate, *which is variouſly taken by Interpreters. I have expounded it literally; not for the* mouth, *but for the* gate of an houſe *or other place: and have put two ſenſes together.*

[g] *Various gloſſes alſo have been made upon the beginning of* v. 22. a merry heart doth good like a medicine: *where becauſe the particle* like *is wanting in the Hebrew, other conſtructions have been made of the words: ſome, for inſtance, having taken them thus,* a merry heart makes a medicine work better, or do more good. *But he that can conſult* Bochartus (*in his* ſecond

Book of Sacred Animals, *Chap.* 16. *Part.* 2.) *may find ſo many examples of the effect of that which they call* כף רמיון caph ſimilitudinis; *that he will not think it unreaſonable to ſupply it, (as our Tranſlators have done) in this place of the* Proverbs.

In the twenty fourth verſe I have put two ſenſes, in which the words may be taken into one. And that none may wonder at the repetition of the [h] *ſame thing in the twenty fifth verſe, which was ſaid juſt before in the twenty firſt; I ſhall here obſerve: That there is no doubt but* Solomon, *having frequent occaſions to ſpeak of the ſame matter, varied the words ſometimes, but not the ſenſe; and ſo the Collectors of his ſayings put down both. And he might ſpeak the oftner of this matter, having an example before his eyes of the great weakneſs of his own Son: who, it is not unlikely, was a perpetual grief to him. There is alſo ſomething obſervable in this verſe, which was not in the other,* viz. *that the untowardneſs of Children have many times different effects upon the Parents: provoking the Fathers to anger and exaſperation; and the Mothers to grief and ſorrow, to which their tenderneſs more inclines them than to the other paſſion.*

There are ſeveral ways alſo of expounding the latter end of the next verſe, v. 26. *I have expreſſed the ſenſe of our Tranſlation; and had reſpect, in the next verſe to that* (v. 27.) *to both readings of the word which we render* excellent.

1. *BEtter* is *a dry morſel, and quietneſs therewith, than a houſe full of ſacrifices* with *ſtrife.*] There is more ſatisfaction in a bit of dry Bread (without butter or oyl, *&c.*) in the open field, and love and concord therewith; than in a houſe full of the beſt chear in the world, attended with brawling, contention and ſtrife.

Ver. 2. *A wiſe ſervant ſhall have rule over a ſon that cauſeth ſhame: and ſhall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.*] Probity and prudence, are ſo much better than mere riches and noble birth; that a wiſe and faithful Servant ſometimes arrives at the honour of being appointed the Governor of a ſon, whoſe folly and wickedneſs make him a diſcredit to his Family: nay, he is left not only Executor of the Father's Will, or Truſtee for the Children; but his merits perhaps are rewarded with a portion of the Eſtate, which is to be diſtributed among them. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 3. *The fining-pot* is *for ſilver, and the furnace for gold: but the* Lord *trieth the hearts.*] The art of man hath found out means to prove whether gold and ſilver be pure or no; but none can ſearch into the ſecret thoughts, deſigns and inclinations of mens Souls, but the Lord: who (as thoſe metals are tried by fire) many times proves and diſcovers what they are by ſharp afflictions and troubles.

Ver. 4. *A wicked doer giveth heed to falſe lips: and a lyar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.*] A man that deſigns evil unto others, hearkens greedily to him, that will tell falſe and miſchievous ſtories; and there never wants ſuch a man, of the very ſame mind with himſelf; for he who gives his mind to lying and falſhood, liſtens to him that ſpeaks the moſt peſtilent things.

Ver. 5. *Whoſo mocketh the poor, reproacheth his maker:* and *he that is glad at calamities, ſhall not be unpuniſhed.*] He that derides a man becauſe he is poor, forgets God, who can bring him down to as low a condition: nay, affronts his Majeſty, who hath promiſed to take a peculiar care of ſuch friendleſs perſons: nor is he much better, who rejoyceth at the calamity of others; which will bring unavoidable puniſhments upon himſelf.

Ver. 6. *Childrens children* are *the crown of old men; and the glory of children* are *their fathers.*] The honour and comfort of Parents lies in a numerous progeny; which doth not degenerate from their anceſtors Vertue: And that which makes Children illuſtrious, is their being deſcended from worthy Parents; whoſe wiſdom and vertue reflects an honour upon their poſterity.

Ver. 7. *Excellent ſpeech becometh not a fool: much leſs do lying lips a prince.*] It doth not become a fool to diſcourſe of grave and weighty matters; which as they are above him, ſo are not regarded out of his mouth, though he ſhould ſpeak excellent things: but it is much leſs ſeemly for a Prince to lye and deceive; which as it is below him, who repreſents the God of truth, ſo it makes him deſpicable and deſtroys his Authority, when his Subjects cannot rely upon his word.

Ver. 8. *A gift* is as *a precious ſtone in the eyes of him that hath it: whitherſoever it turneth, it proſpereth.*] A gift is ſo tempting that it can no more be refuſed, than a lovely Jewel by him to whom it is preſented: and ſuch is its power, it commonly prevails over all men, diſpatches all buſineſs, carries all cauſes; and in a word, effects whatſoever a man deſires.

Ver. 9. *He that covereth a tranſgreſſion, ſeeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth* very *friends.*] He that paſſes by, and buries in oblivion, a tranſgreſſion that hath been committed againſt him, takes the beſt courſe to preſerve friendſhip, and to make himſelf univerſally beloved: but he who rakes up that fault again, and objects it afreſh when it was forgotten, breaks the ſtricteſt bands of amity, and makes an irreconcileable ſeparation. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 10. *A reproof entreth more into a wiſe man, than an hundred ſtripes into a fool.*] One reproof penetrates deeper into the mind of an ingenious man, and works a greater alteration there, than an hundred ſtripes will do for the amendment of an obſtinate fool.

Ver. 11. *An evil* man *ſeeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him.*] Who ſeeking nothing but to have his own will, and being ſo refractory that he hath ſhaken off all reverence to God, or to his Governours, is wholly bent upon miſchief, and cannot be reclaimed; it remains therefore only, that a ſevere execution be done upon him, to cut him off in his folly, without mercy. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 12. *Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.*] There is leſs danger in meeting a Bear in the height of her rage, than a furious fool in the purſuit of his unruly paſſions and deſires: for it is poſſible to defend a man's ſelf againſt the one; but there is no way to hinder the brutiſh motions of the other. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 13.

Ver. 13. *Whoſo rewardeth evil for good, evil ſhall not depart from his houſe.*] It is ſo unnatural for a man to return evil to him from whom he hath received nothing but good; that the puniſhment of his ingratitude ſhall not reſt in his own perſon, but deſcend upon his poſterity to all generations.

Ver. 14. *The beginning of ſtrife* is as *when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.*] When men begin a quarrel or a difference, they know not where it will end: For the very firſt breach is like cutting the banks of a river; which preſently overflows the neighbouring grounds, but cannot eaſily be reduced into its bounds again. It is beſt therefore to make peace immediately, before both parties be involved in ſuch troubles, as, like a deluge of water, lay all deſolate.

Ver. 15. *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both* are *abomination to the* LORD.] It is hard to ſay, which is moſt deteſtable to the LORD, he that pleads for a wicked man, and, more than that, acquits him: or he that pleads againſt the righteous, nay, plainly condemns him. Certain it is, they are both moſt highly obnoxious to his diſpleaſure, who is the fountain of juſtice; and as he would have it exactly adminiſtred, ſo he hates thoſe who endeavour to confound the nature of good and evil among men.

Ver. 16. *Wherefore* is there *a price in the hand of a fool to get wiſdom, ſeeing* he hath *no heart* to it?] What good doth a great eſtate in the poſſeſſion of a fool? Can he therewith purchaſe wiſdom how to uſe it? alas! he wants underſtanding to deſire it, and to procure good Inſtructors; in which his riches (if his mind were good) might be ſerviceable to him.

Ver. 17. *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity.*] Time makes proof of a Friend; who, if he be ſincere, loves not merely for a fit, nor alters with the change of one's condition; but continues ſtedfaſt in adverſity, as well as in proſperity; nay, in ſtraits and diſtreſſes, ſhews himſelf more like a Brother than a Friend. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 18. *A man void of underſtanding ſtriketh hands,* and *becometh ſurety in the preſence of his friend.*] He is very inconſiderate, whoſe kindneſs makes him forward to paſs his word for the payment of another man's debts (VI. 1. XI. 15.) and eſpecially to enter into bonds in the preſence of his neighbour for whom he engages: which may make him more careleſs about the payment, than he would have been, if unknown to him, he had been ſecurity for him.

Ver. 19. *He loveth tranſgreſſion that loveth ſtrife:* and *he that exalteth his gate, ſeeketh deſtruction.*] He vainly pretends to the love of piety, who accuſtoms himſelf to brawling and contention: which as neceſſarily draws along with it abundance of ſins, as lifting up a man's ſelf above his eſtate, in raiſing ſumptuous buildings, brings him to ruin: or as breach of the publick peace opens wide the flood-gates to all iniquity. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 20. *He that hath a froward heart, findeth no good: and he that hath a perverſe tongue, falleth into miſchief.*] A man of wicked deſigns, which he reſolves to accompliſh by any ſort of means, ſhall find himſelf deceived in his expectation: and he who employs his tongue to deceit and fraud, pretending fair to men before their face, but ſlandering them behind their back, ſhall, by that very means, bring miſchief upon himſelf.

Ver. 21. *He that begetteth a fool* doth it *to his ſorrow; and the father of a fool hath no joy.*] Great is the care which ought to be taken, in the contract of Marriage, and in the education of Children: For if a Son prove vicious and lewd, it will be ſuch an inexpreſſible grief to his Father, that he will take no comfort at all, in any thing he enjoys, *v.* 25.

Ver. 22. *A merry heart doth good* like a *medicine: but a broken ſpirit drieth the bones.*] And conſequently it will ſhorten his days: For as nothing conduces more to health than a cheerful ſpirit, which ſerves inſtead of phyſick; ſo nothing deſtroys it more than ſadneſs and grief, which conſumes the vital juices, and dries up the body to skin and bone. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 23. *A wicked* man *taketh a gift out of the boſom to pervert the ways of judgment.*] No man would willingly be known to be ſo wicked as to be bribed to do injuſtice: but there are too many that will ſuffer themſelves to be ſecretly corrupted by preſents, to give counſel or judgment contrary to the courſe of Law and Equity.

Ver. 24. *Wiſdom* is *before him that hath underſtanding; but the eyes of a fool* are *in the ends of the earth.*] As a wiſe man's underſtanding appears in his very countenance; and a fool is known by his gariſh and wondering eyes: ſo the one hath his wiſdom always preſent and ready at hand to guide and govern him; when the other knows not what to follow, but his thoughts are roving up and down to no purpoſe, though he ramble to the very ends of the earth.

Ver. 25. *A fooliſh ſon* is *a grief to his father, and bitterneſs to her that bear him.*] A fooliſh diſſolute Son, who regards not the counſel of his Parents, waſting their Eſtate and diſgracing their Family, is ſuch a vexation to his Father, that he provokes his indignation; and ſuch a grief to his mother, that it makes her life bitter and irkſome to her. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 26. *Alſo to puniſh the juſt* is *not good,* nor *to ſtrike princes for equity.*] There may be ſpecious pretences for it, but it is againſt all honeſty and piety, to puniſh innocent perſons together with delinquents: eſpecially to ſcourge Judges and Governors, for doing equal juſtice upon all offenders.

Ver. 27. *He that hath knowledge, ſpareth his words:* and *a man of underſtanding is of an excellent ſpirit.*] The more any man knows, the leſs he is apt to talk: for his wiſdom gives him ſuch an excellent compoſure of ſpirit, that it repreſſes his heat, his forwardneſs and haſte; and makes him cooly deliberate what, and when it is fit to ſpeak.

Ver. 28. *Even a fool when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe:* and *he that ſhutteth his lips,* is eſteemed *a man of underſtanding.*] Such a vertue it is to be ſilent, that he who underſtands nothing is deemed wiſe, as long as he holds his peace, and he whoſe mind hath ſuch power over his mouth, as to keep it ſhut, that nothing may ſuddenly and impetuouſly go out, is wiſe indeed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *There is ſo much difficulty in the two firſt Verſes, which hath produced ſo many various interpretations, that I ſcarce know which to follow. Some take that word which we tranſlate* ſeparateth himſelf, *in a good ſenſe; others in a bad: I have choſen the latter, becauſe it ſeems moſt agreeable to the reſt of the words. But the* Chaldee *Interpreter, gives a quite different ſenſe both of that word, and of ſome other in theſe verſes: and* de Dieu *hath ſhown there is ſuch reaſon for it, that I think I am obliged here to take notice of it, and to paraphraſe upon it.*

By niphrad, *which we render* ſeparateth himſelf, *he underſtands* a man divided, *uncertain in his own mind, who can ſtick to nothing: but wanders about in his own thoughts. And the laſt word in the firſt verſe,* jith galla, *which we tranſlate* intermedleth, *he tranſlates* is left deſolate. *And then in the next verſe, taking* behith galloth *for* wandring up and down; *not for* diſcovering, *or* revealing, *as we do, the Paraphraſe will run thus.*

V. 1. An unconſtant man deſires many things, and ſeeks ſatisfaction: but whatſoever he ſeeks, he never meets with it, but is defeated, and diſappointed in all his deſigns.

2. And this is a certain character of a fool, that he never fixes in any thing: but chuſes rather to gad up and down, and rove from one inquiry to another; than give his mind to true wiſdom and prudence, in which he hath no pleaſure.

The Lord Bacon *aims at this, I ſuppoſe, when he briefly expreſſes the ſenſe of* Solomon, *thus,* Pro deſiderio quærit cerebroſus, omnibus immiſcet ſe, " *A hare-brain'd man ſeeks to ſatisfie his* " *fancy, and intermixeth himſelf with all things. According to that of* Seneca, Vita ſine propoſito, languida eſt & vaga. " *A life that pro-* " *poſeth no end to purſue, is faint, ſickly and* " *vagrant.*

If we take the word niphrad *in a good ſenſe, then the Paraphraſe muſt run thus:*

1. He that lives retired, and ſequeſters himſelf from all company and buſineſs, out of a true affection to wiſdom; endeavours to have a ſound knowledge and underſtanding of things.

2. But a vain man addicts himſelf to his Studies, for no other end; but only to vapour with a ſhew of wiſdom, which he doth not love.

[b] *As for the* vulgar *Tranſlation, it is ſo remote from the* Hebrew, *that I ſhall only obſerve an handſome application which the Lord* Bacon *hath made of the* ſecond *verſe; to a quite differ- purpoſe from all Interpreters that I am acquainted with. The words there run thus,* Non recipit ſtultus verba prudentum, niſi ea dixeris quæ verſantur in corde ejus. *Which is commonly underſtood of* accommodating one's ſelf to the humour of a fool, *who otherwiſe will not regard what is ſaid to him: but that great Man applies* to the way of dealing with men of corrupt minds and depraved judgments. " *Who pre-ſuppoſe that honeſty grows out of* " *weakneſs of wit, and want of experience; or* " *only out of a ſilly belief given to Preachers and* " *School-maſters, to Books and Popular opini-* " *ons. And therefore unleſs you can make them* " *plainly perceive that you know what is in* " *their very heart, when you exhort and ad-* " *moniſh them; and are as well acquainted* " *with their depraved principles and crooked* " *rules, and have as fully diſcovered, and deeply* " *ſounded them as themſelves; they will deſpiſe* " *all manner of vertue and the moſt excellent* " *counſels; according to that admirable Oracle* " *of* Solomon, A fool will not receive the " words of the wiſe, unleſs thou ſpeakeſt the " very things that are in his heart, *i. e. an* " *honeſt man can do no good upon the wicked;* " *unleſs he know all the coverts and depths of* " *wickedneſs. In which* Matchiavel *himſelf* " *hath done ſome ſervice; by diſcovering plainly* " what men uſe to do, *not* what they ought " to do. *Advanc. of Learning,* B. *VII.* Ch. 2.

[c] *The next verſe many have a connexion with theſe two, and intend to deſcribe the worſt of wicked men; who ſeek for glory by being ſo bold as to ſcorn Religion, and all the Teachers of it. Such men are the greateſt of* Solomon's *fools: by whom an* excellent perſon *(whom the* Hebrews *call* Iſh *in oppoſition to* Adam) *ſhould not be diſcouraged, from pouring out good Inſtructions; as he ſhows in the following words,* verſe 4.

[d] *Then after a caution to Judges* (v. 5.) *to ſearch into the merits of a cauſe; and not merely to look to the quality of the perſon that appears before them; he obſerves in ſeveral verſes, the miſchief done by the tongue,* v. 6, 7, 8. *In the laſt of which the word* Mithlahamim *being of uncertain ſignification, (becauſe it is but once more uſed, and in this Book, to the ſame purpoſe) I have taken in two or three of the ſenſes of which it is capable: as he that pleaſes to examine, will be ſatisfied.*

[e] *Rabbi* Levi *obſerves, that in the tenth verſe there begins another ſort of precept of a different kind from thoſe that have been hitherto delivered from the beginning of the* Tenth *Chapter, to this place. All which have been in a manner, concerning the danger of ſuch vices, as* ſloth, hatred, anger, deceit, brawling, ſtrife, impiety, *and other parts of that folly, againſt which he hath given many general cautions. But now he proceeds, as that* Jewiſh Doctor *thinks, to an Argument of another nature, directing men in the management of affairs of State, or in domeſtick buſineſs,* &c. *Which is true in part, but not an exact Obſervation. For there are precepts of the former kind, interſperſed in the following Chapters, as any one may ſee that will read them: and ſo there are ſeveral political maxims, and others belonging to different matters, in the Chapters foregoing. Even that obſervation which here immediately follows* (v. 11.) *concerning a rich man's confidence in his Wealth, rather than in the Divine Providence and Protection, was delivered in part before, X.* 13. *And the very next concerning pride and humility* (v. 12.) *in Chap. XV.* 33. *and XVI.* 18. *And that alſo* (v. 16.) *about gifts was touched in XVII.* 8.

[f] *The thirteenth verſe is referred by ſome to Judges who were anciently called* Cognitores. *And in good Authors* cognoſcere *is as much as to do the office of a Judge; who ought to take*

the

the greateſt care to know the truth, before he give a ſentence. For if it be a ſhame to a private perſon, in ordinary diſcourſe, to anſwer a matter before he heareth it; *much more will it be to a Magiſtrate, if in matters of juſtice and judgment, he come to a reſolution, before he hath taken full cognizance of them.*

[g] *Some would connect the ſeventeenth verſe with the foregoing, but I have taken it ſeparately. And there being ſeveral ways of interpreting it, either* politically, *with relation to cauſes brought before a judge; or* ſpiritually, *with relation to what is tranſacted in a man's own Soul; I have followed our Tranſlation, which ſeems to me, neareſt to the Hebrew. In which a* juſt man *is not the perſon of whom* Solomon *ſpeaks; but the mark of the Nominative Caſe (as* Grammarians *call it) is ſet before the word* firſt. *So that it hath the ſame meaning with our vulgar ſaying;* One tale is good, till another be told: *though I think there is more in it; and the Lord* Bacon *hath made this excellent diſcourſe upon it; which I have not neglected in my Paraphraſe.*

" *The firſt Information, ſays he, (*Adv. Learning, " *Book VIII. Ch. 2. Par. 17.) in any cauſe, if* " *it a little fix it ſelf in the mind of the Judge,* " *takes deep root, and wholly ſeaſons and pre-* " *poſſeſſes it; ſo as it can hardly be taken out,* " *unleſs ſome manifeſt falſhood be found in the* " *matter of the Information; or ſome cunning* " *dealing, in exhibiting, and laying open the* " *ſame. For a bare and ſimple defence, though* " *it be juſt and more weighty, can hardly com-* " *penſate the prejudice of the firſt Information,* " *nor is of force in it ſelf, to reduce the ſcales* " *of Juſtice, once ſwayed down to an equal* " *ballance. Wherefore it is the ſafeſt courſe for* " *a Judge, that nothing touching the proofs and* " *merit of the cauſe be intimated before-hand;* " *until both Parties be heard together: And it* " *is beſt for the defendant, if he perceive the* " *Judge to be pre-occupated, to labour princi-* " *pally in this (ſo far as the quality of the* " *cauſe will admit) to diſcover ſome cunning* " *ſhifts, and fraudulent dealing, practis'd by* " *the adverſe party, to the abuſe of the Judge.*

They that expound this verſe (as the Ancients generally do) concerning private judgment, within a man's own ſoul, follow the LXX. and the vulgar Latin: and commonly make this the meaning. A good man, before he mind another man's faults, will firſt narrowly look to his own; *and call himſelf to an account, before he inquire after their miſcarriages. This is an excellent ſenſe (if the words would bear it) which ſome of the* Lutherans *follow; even* Melancthon *himſelf, who thus tranſlates it,* Juſtus initio eſt accuſator ſui, poſteà inquirit in alium: *and runs into a long diſcourſe concerning ſelf-love, and mens blindneſs to their own faults, and quick-ſightedneſs in ſpying other mens; citing the known ſayings of* Catullus, Horace, *and* Perſius *to this purpoſe. But, though he take the* juſt man *here to be oppoſed to the* hypocrite *our Saviour ſpeaks of, who minds the mote in his Brother's eye, and neglects the beam in his own, yet he acknowledges that the Greek word in the LXX belongs to the Law, and the civil Courts,* viz. προδολεία, *which is the allegations of the accuſer, before the other party be heard: and hath this remark out of* Demoſthenes. It is hard to pull out of mens minds, the opinion they have firſt conceived.

Which Verres *among the* Romans *underſtood ſo well, that it was his common trick* to accuſe thoſe whom he had injured: *for men are apt to favour the Plantiff, ſuppoſing he cannot have the impudence to complain without a cauſe.*

Nay, there are thoſe in the Roman Church *that apply the vulgar Tranſlation this way; to this ſenſe.* A juſt man is ſo prudent (as well as honeſt) as to relate all that concerns his cauſe ſincerely, without concealing any thing; even accuſing himſelf if he be guilty: whereby he procures greater favour, and prevents what his Adverſary would have ſaid; who, be ſure, would have laid it open to his diſgrace, if he had craftily omitted any thing, *&c.*

But I will not trouble the Reader with any other of their Interpretations; which are deviſed merely to make good that Tranſlation. The truth of ours may be further juſtified from the next, v. 18. *which belongs to the matter of civil controverſies: which if the Judges could not determine, were referred to* God's *deciſion by lots.*

[h] *But I have ſaid enough, if not too much of this: and therefore ſhall only obſerve a few reflections which* Melancthon *makes upon the Twenty-ſecond verſe.* " *Where he notes* firſt " *how acceptable the* ſtate of Marriage *is to* " *Almighty* God, *as well as unto us. And* " next, *what care he takes of pious perſons in* " *that ſtate; for ſo he underſtands thoſe words,* " *as they run in the Vulg. Lat.* Hauriet vo- " luptatem à Deo. *As if he ſhould ſay,* there " are great dangers in humane life, and many " common miſeries; but God will be the " keeper of ſuch married perſons, as in hap- " py concord and agreement, invoke his " protection. *Such were* Zachary *and* Eliza- " beth, *and other pious perſons; whom* God " *wonderfully preſerved, when the armies of* " *wicked men ravaged all* Judea. *When* La- " myrus *ſlew* 30000 Jews, *and cauſed the* " *captives to eat the carkaſſes of their Bretbren;* " *then he protected* Zachary *and* Elizabeth, " *and the* bleſſed Virgin *and her parents; as* " *he ſaved the* three Children *in the fiery fur-* " *nace. By which examples we may conceive,* " *what it is to* draw pleaſure from the Lord.

" *Thoſe words alſo ſhow, what comfort and de-* " *light there is in an agreeable marriage; and* " *therefore we ought to flee fornication: and* " *keep in mind thoſe ſevere threatnings,* Whore- " mongers and adulterers God will judge, " *&c. and the puniſhments* God *inflicted upon* " *the inhabitants of* Canaan *for their confuſed* " *luſts.* Nec eſt dubium, magnam partem " calamitatum, *&c.* Nor is there any doubt " that a great part of the calamities among " all mankind, are the puniſhments of " filthy luſts. *Let us therefore be more ardent* " *in begging chaſtity of* God; *for the more he* " *is diſpleaſed with impurity, the more care-* " *fully we ought to preſerve chaſtity; and let* " *us obſerve that rule,* To ſhun ſins, is to ſhun " the occaſions of ſins.

1. *Through deſire, a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh* and *intermeddleth with all wiſdom.*] He that effects ſingularity inquires into all manner of things, according as his vainglorious humour leads him: which makes him alſo bend himſelf, with all the wit he hath, to overthrow the ſolid reaſons of wiſer men. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *A fool hath no delight in underſtanding, but that his heart may diſcover it ſelf.*] For a fool will never take any pleaſure in true underſtanding; but all the deſign of his ſtudies is, to make a vain oſtentation of wiſdom unto others: This is his chiefeſt pleaſure, to hear himſelf diſcourſe; that is, diſcover the folly that is in his heart. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *When the wicked cometh*, then *cometh alſo contempt, and with ignominy reproach.*] Into whatſoever company or ſociety (ſuppoſe into the ſchools of Wiſdom) a prophane perſon comes, he brings along with him, contempt of GOD and Religion, and good men: and (as one wickedneſs grows out of another) that contempt improves into affronts, and reproachful language of them. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *The words of a man's mouth*, are as *deep waters*, and *the well-ſpring of wiſdom*, as *a flowing brook.*] A man of great underſtanding is never exhauſted, nor wants matter of uſeful inſtruction: his mind being like a fountain, out of which wiſe thoughts ſpring perpetually; and flow in abundance, with a torrent of Eloquence, for the common good and benefit.

Ver. 5. It is *not good to accept the perſon of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.*] Apologies may be made for it, but it can never be made conſiſtent with honeſty and goodneſs, to have reſpect to the perſon, not to the cauſe, which is brought before one in judgment: for by that means the wicked is favoured, becauſe he is rich, or becauſe he is a friend, *&c.* and the juſt man loſes his right, and is oppreſſed, becauſe he is poor, or none of the Judge's acquaintance.

Ver. 6. *A fools lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for ſtrokes.*] If a fool find others ſcolding or contending, he will thruſt himſelf into the quarrel; but is ſo unskilful, that inſtead of making them friends, he increaſes the difference, till from words they come to blows; in which he eſcapes not without ſome ſhare of them to himſelf.

Ver. 7. *A fools mouth is his deſtruction, and his lips* are *the ſnare of his ſoul.*] For in all other caſes, a fool uſes his tongue ſo imprudently, that he ruins himſelf by his own diſcourſe: and if he go about to defend what he ſaith, he is but the more intangled, to the certain hazard of his life.

Ver. 8. *The words of a tale-bearer* are *as wounds, and they go down into the innermoſt parts of the belly.*] A whiſperer of falſe ſtories makes a great ſhow of harmleſneſs, if not of love and kindneſs, when he backbites others; nay, ſeems perhaps to do it very unwillingly, with great grief of heart, and not without excuſes for the perſons, from whom he detracts: but his words give them the moſt deadly wound; and ſink deep into the mind of thoſe that hear them. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 9. *He alſo that is ſlothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter.*] There is ſo little difference between a ſlothful man and a prodigal, that they may be called Brethren: for he that looks not after his buſineſs, muſt needs come to poverty, as well as he that is a ſpend-thrift.

Ver. 10. *The name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.*] The Almighty power and goodneſs of the great LORD of the World, is the ſecureſt defence in all manner of dangers: unto which a vertuous man may have the confidence cheerfully to reſort, and hope to find protection; nay, to be there as ſafe as if he was in an impregnable fortreſs. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 11. *The rich man's wealth* is *his ſtrong city: and as an high wall in his own conceit.*] The worldly-minded man indeed thinks otherwiſe, and places his ſecurity in heaps of wealth, which he fancies hath a power to do any thing, and is able to defend him (like a high bulwark, which none can ſcale) from all aſſaults: but, alaſs! this is only his own vain opinion; he is ſafe merely in imagination.

Ver. 12. *Before deſtruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour* is *humility.*] When a man's ſpirit grows lofty by proſperity, forgetting GOD, and deſpiſing his brethren, it is a certain fore-runner of his utter deſtruction: as on the other ſide, humility, meekneſs and patience, in a low condition, is the beſt preparation for honour and preferment.

Ver. 13. *He that anſwereth a matter before he heareth* it, *it* is *folly and ſhame unto him.*] He that is ſo forward as to anſwer to a buſineſs before he hath heard the ſtate of it (that is before he underſtand it) thinks perhaps to ſhow the quickneſs of his apprehenſion: but, by his impertinent diſcourſe, declares his egregious folly, and makes himſelf ridiculous. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 14. *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtain his infirmity: but a wounded ſpirit, who can bear?*] There is a vaſt difference between outward and inward evils; for a manly ſpirit will ſupport us under bodily ſickneſſes and outward afflictions: but if the mind it ſelf have loſt its courage, and become abject, caſt down and oppreſſed with grief and ſadneſs; it is not in the power of man to raiſe and lift it up.

Ver. 15. *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wiſe ſeeketh knowledge.*] He (therefore) that hath ſo much underſtanding, as to conſider what is good for himſelf, will take the greateſt care to poſſeſs his mind with the true knowledge of GOD, and of his duty to him: and be ſo wiſe as to liſten to thoſe that can give him right information, for it is this alone, that can preſerve the mind from being dejected and broken.

Ver. 16. *A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.*] There is no man ſo mean but he may make his way, whitherſoever he deſires, by gifts and preſents: which will procure his inlargement, if he be in priſon; and more than that, bring him into favour with great men; nay, purchaſe him the honour to wait upon Princes.

Ver. 17. He that is *firſt in his own cauſe*, ſeemeth *juſt: but his neighbour cometh and ſearcheth*

ſearcheth him.] A man may ſeem to have a good cauſe, who hath got the ſtart of his neighbour; till he come alſo to examine his information, and open the whole matter before the Judge: nay, more than this, he hath a great advantage who firſt poſſeſſes the Judge's mind, with the juſtice of his cauſe; for it will not be eaſie for his adverſary to find out his tricks and to confute him, without a diligent ſearch and curious inquiry into what he hath alledged. *See* Arg. [g].

Ver. 18. *The lot cauſeth contentions to ceaſe, and parteth between the mighty.*] But in ſome caſes it is very hard to make an end of ſuits; where the reaſons are ſtrong on both ſides, or the parties contending both very powerful to maintain their pretenſions: and then the caſting of lots is an equal way to determine the controverſie; and put each of them in quiet poſſeſſion of that which falls to his ſhare.

Ver. 19. *A brother offended* is harder to be won *than a ſtrong city: and* their *contentions* are *like the bars of a caſtle.*] But there are no contentions ſo ſharp and obſtinate, as thoſe among Brethren: who grow ſo refractory when they have tranſgreſſed againſt each other, that it is eaſier to take a ſtrong City, or to break the bars of a Caſtle; than it is to compoſe their differences, and remove all the obſtructions that lie in the way to their hearty reconciliation.

Ver. 20. *A man's belly ſhall be ſatisfied with the fruit of his mouth*; and *with the increaſe of his lips ſhall he be filled.*] The Tongue is ſo hard to govern, and ſo much depends upon it, that (it cannot be too oft repeated XII. 14. XIII. 2.) we ought to take as great care about the words we ſpeak, as we do about the fruit of our Trees, or the increaſe of the earth, which we are to eat; for according as they are wholſome and good, or unſavoury and bad; ſo will the pleaſure or the pain be, wherewith we ſhall be filled.

Ver. 21. *Death and life* are *in the power of the tongue; and they that love it, ſhall eat the fruit thereof.*] The good or the harm that the tongue can do, both to a man's ſelf and unto others, is more than can be expreſſed; for many have cut their own throats by incautious words, when others have remained ſafe by ſilence, or brought themſelves off from danger by prudent anſwers: in like manner by falſe accuſations it deſtroys other men, or ſaves them by teſtifying the truth; and this may be laid down for a general Rule, that they who love to talk much ſhall ſuffer by it.

Ver. 22. Whoſo *findeth a wife, findeth a good* thing, *and obtaineth favour of the* LORD.] He who hath married a wife, that is truly a help meet for him, hath met with a moſt excellent bleſſing: and ought thankfully to acknowledge the ſingular favour of GOD, in guiding his mind to make ſo happy a choice. *See* Arg. [b].

Ver. 23. *The poor uſeth intreaties, but the rich anſwereth roughly.*] Boldneſs doth not become a Beggar, but modeſt intreaties and doleful ſupplications, which is the proper language of the poor and miſerable: and if they meet with a ſtern or harſh anſwer from the rich, it is no wonder; and they muſt ſtill humbly deprecate their diſpleaſure.

Ver. 24. *A man* that hath *friends, muſt ſhew himſelf friendly: and there is a friend* that *ſticketh cloſer than a brother.*] A friendly perſon is prone to do all neighbourly offices, which is the very end of friendſhip, and the way to preſerve it: and ſuch a friend is ſometimes found, who loves ſo heartily; that he ſticks cloſer to his Friend in any ſtreight, and aſſiſts him more faithfully than a Brother.

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a compariſon between the Rich and the Poor; whom, in another regard, he had compared together in the laſt verſe but one of the foregoing Chapter. The ſenſe is plain enough; and it is,* μία τῶν παροιμιῶν σοφῶν ἔχουσα, one of thoſe Proverbs, which contains much wiſdom in it, *as* Greg. Nazianzen *ſpeaks* (Orat. *XXVI. p.* 458, 459.) *who applies it unto* "*Chriſtians of* mean underſtanding, *and* ſim- "ple ſpeech; *that underſtand not* λόγων τερπνῶν: "*neither the* inſtances *of* Pyrrho, *nor the* "Syllogiſms *of* Chryſippus; *nor the* depra- "ved cunning *of* Ariſtotle's *Arts, nor the* "witchery *of* Plato's *Eloquence: which like* "*the Egyptian plagues had infeſted the Church.* "*There is no need, ſays he, of any of theſe: but* "*a poor man* that walks in his ſimplicity "ὁ πένης ὁ λόγῳ καὶ γνώσει, *as he paraphraſeth it,* "poor in diſcourſe, and reaſoning and know- "ledge) *and rules upon plain ſimple words,* "*is much better (and will in this way be ſaved,* "*as in a ſmall Cogboat) than a Fool (for he is* "*no better) that knows how to wind and turn* "*every way in his diſcourſe; and moſt unlearn-* "*edly truſts to his demonſtrations,* &c. *But this muſt be acknowledged not to be the literal ſenſe of the words, but only an accommodation of them to his purpoſe: which was to repreſent* how commendable ſimplicity is in Religion, and inquiries of Faith; *as well as in all things elſe. Not that a man ſhould content himſelf to be ignorant, but only that he ſhould not be too curious and ſubtil in his diſquiſitions.*

[b] *For* Solomon, *in the next verſe, obſerves two great ſprings of all our miſcarriages*; want of underſtanding, *and* want of deliberation. *To make too much haſte in a buſineſs, is the way not to ſpeed (according to the known Proverb) and to run blindly upon any thing is no leſs prejudicial to us in our undertakings. That's the meaning of the firſt word, which we tranſlate* alſo: *both he that affects things without knowledge, and he that purſues what he underſtands, without deliberation, run into many miſtakes, and commit many ſins. So ſome render the word* Nephes (Soul) the deſire of the Soul, *the appetite, which muſt be always governed by prudence; or elſe it will run a man upon rocks, and precipitate him into ruin. For which miſcarriage, he ſhews in the next verſe* (v. 3.) *he muſt blame none but himſelf, and never in the leaſt reflect upon* GOD, *as if he were negligent of us, or hard to us: which men are prone to think, when they have fooliſhly undone themſelves.*

[c] *Then follows an obſervation, which he had made before, XIV.* 20. *but here repeats, in different words,*

words, over and over again, v. 4, 6, 7. *For it is a lamentable thing to see how little true Friendship there is in the world; most men altering and changing together with the fortune (as we call it) of those whom they pretend to love. If they be rich, they are courted by every body; but poverty shews how insincerely. The Books of all antient Authors are full of such Sentences; which I shall not so much as mention.* [d] *But note that in the midst of these, he inserts* (v. 5.) *an observation (which he had formerly made) of a greater wickedness in humane nature; which moves them either* publickly *to accuse others falsely, or* secretly *to back-bite them; neither of which shall escape unpunished. For* there is no word so secret that shall go for nought, and the mouth that belieth, slayeth the Soul; *as the* Wisdom of Solomon *excellently speaks, I.* 11. *This is repeated also again in this very Chapter,* v. 9. *with the alteration only of one word. The reason of which is, that* Solomon *(as I have noted before) using often the same axioms, sometimes varied the phrase, though not the sense: and the Collectors of his sayings, thought good to set down his different forms of speech, for the same thing. In both verses, the* LXX *plainly understand him to speak of such lyes as are pernicious and hurtful to others: and in the latter of them, they take the* destruction *which the Wise man threatens unto such lyars, to arise from their own wicked words. And so I have expressed it in my Paraphrase. There are those, who think that this Sentence is repeated in the ninth verse, as an admonition to the rich men spoken of in the verses foregoing: who break their promises with those that depend upon them; and give good words, when there is no need of them: but will do no good when men call for their assistance. These shall suffer for their falseness. But this seems to be strain'd; and not agreeable to the meaning of the Hebrew Text.*

[e] *That which follows* (v. 10.) *is a notable admonition of the confused and disordered state of things, here in this present world: wherein we too often see men void of wit or goodness, wallowing in pleasure; that is, abounding in all things that can gratifie their senses, which they please most absurdly: and mean men getting into power, and lording it over their betters,* &c. *These things are very unseemly, saith* Solomon; *and the latter of these more unseemly than the former: but so it will be, unless men become wise and good; for most are made worse by prosperity, which they know not how to use. Therefore it is a true Rule of the Son of* Sirach, *XXXIII.* Eccluſ. 24. Fodder, a wand and burthens for an Aſs: and bread, correction and work for a Slave. *Every one is best in the condition that is proper for him; and therefore a Slave should be kept under; and a brutish Sot be restrained from taking all his pleasure. For no man is fit to govern another, that cannot govern himself, as the next verse intimates: And the more power any man hath, the harder it is for him to command his passions: which may be suggested in the twelfth* [f] *verse; for the* young Lyon *to whom a King is compared, as he is the strongest, so is the fiercest of all other.*

From hence the Wise man passes to some domestick observations, v. 13, 14, 15, 18, 19. *Upon which if I should make any remarks, it would extend this Preface beyond its just bounds. The skilful Reader will see where I have put two senses together: which I could not do in the twenty-third verse; and therefore shall here give a short account of it.*

[g] *All Interpreters, except one, understand it as our Translation hath rendred it; by supplying a word before,* abideth satisfied. *Only* Lud. de Diu *thinks the parts of this verse are opposite; as the rest use to be: and by that word which we translate* satisfied *(which signifies* full *in the Hebrew Language) understands proud and haughty people (as they who are rich are too prone to be) who are here opposed to him that fears* God; *as they are in* Luk. *I.* 50, 51, 53. *And the Paraphrase will run thus;* He that is possessed with such a religious sense of God, that he fears to offend him, is a most happy man: but he that is swoln with pride and forgets God, when wordly goods flow in upon him, shall lie down at last in sorrow; and never want something or other to afflict him. *And something of this sense the LXX. seem to have had in their mind; who make the members of this verse opposite as he doth; understanding by* שבע full, *he that hath no fear of* God. *For so their Translation runs;* the fear of the Lord is to a man's life, ἐν ὑψει, *&c.* but he that is without fear (viz. *of* God) shall abide in places, where there is no knowledge to govern him, i. e. *run blindly into all manner of mischief.*

[h] *The next verse is a most elegant, but hyperbolical description of a man that hath given up himself to sloth: who refuses to do things, as* easie *as to pull his hand out of his bosom; and as* necessary *as to eat and drink. This being the plain sense, I have not varied from the common translation of the word* zallachath; *which every where signifies a pot, or dish, or something like it; and can only by a metaphor be applied to the bosom, or arm-holes. But we must either so understand it, or else take the first word* taman, hide, *in a very improper sense: for there can be no cause for hiding the hand in a pot. Therefore we must either translate it as we do; or else understand by* hide, *putting, or thrusting the hand into the pot or dish; and thus translate the whole verse:* A sluggard puts his hand into the dish; but will not so much as move it from thence unto his mouth.

[i] *The next verse, as* Melancthon *well notes, is an observation concerning the way of amending the world. Some are so bad, they must be handled with great sharpness: especially such prophane men, as with an Epicurean contempt deride admonition, and grow thereby more furious. But there are those who grow better, even by the example of severity against notorious Offenders: As the* Gibeonites *came and sought peace, when they saw their neighbours destroyed; and the punishment of* Sisamnes *made* Otanes *more cautious, when he was placed in the Seat covered with his Predecessor's skin; as* Herodotus *relates in his* Terpsichore. *But then there are a* third *sort, who need not so much; but being admonished, are obedient to those that tell them of their faults. To such a reproof, at the most is sufficient.*

[k] *In the two next verses, I have had respect to both constructions, of which they are capable.*

But

But in v. 28. *I have omitted the ſenſe, which ſome great Hebricians give of the words; as if an* ungodly witneſs *ſought only by falſe colours to deceive the Judge, and thereby pervert judgment. For a witneſs of* Belial, *ſeems to me rather to ſignifie ſuch an impudent Varlet, as ſticks not boldly to teſtifie to the groſſeſt lyes.*

1. *BEtter is the poor that walketh in his integrity, then* he that is *perverſe in his lips, and is a fool.*] A poor man who acts ſincerely, and hath no guile in his mouth, is far happier, and more to be commended than him that gathers great riches by fraud and circumvention: which he takes to be cunning, but will prove folly in the end. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Alſo,* that *the ſoul* be *without knowledge,* it is *not good; and he that haſteth with* his *feet, ſinneth.*] Ignorance and inconſideration, are equally miſchievous; for a mind that knows not what it ought to chuſe, and what to avoid, can never do well: and if a man haſtily and unadviſedly purſue an end (which he reaſonably propounds to himſelf) and will not take time to deliberate, he muſt needs commit many errors. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *The fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth againſt the* LORD.] Yet he is unwilling to take the blame upon himſelf, but commits this grand error after all the reſt; that when his own folly, and perhaps wickedneſs, hath led him to many misfortunes, he imagines GOD is unkind to him: and is vexed, not at himſelf, but at the Divine Providence; againſt which he perpetually murmurs.

Ver. 4. *Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is ſeparated from his neighbour.*] Together with Riches, a man gets many (and perhaps great and powerful) Friends, though he had none before: but he that hath moſt need of them is ſo far from getting any, that, if he had one, he loſes even him, when he grows poor. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 5. *A falſe witneſs ſhall not be unpuniſhed, and* he that *ſpeaketh lyes, ſhall not eſcape.*] A falſe Witneſs, who fears not in open Court to accuſe the innocent, ſhall meet at laſt with a juſt puniſhment: nor ſhall he eſcape, who privately calumniates, and vents his malice in lyes to the prejudice of his neighbour. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 6. *Many will intreat the favour of the prince; and every man* is *a friend to him that giveth gifts.*] A Prince never wants ſuitors for his favour, which the greateſt perſons ſeek with the humbleſt ſubmiſſions: and every one loves, or pretends to love him; whoſe liberality is ſo well known every where, that it hath procured him the name of a bountiful giver.

Ver. 7. *All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he purſueth* them with *words,* yet *they are wanting to him.*] All the kindred of a poor man not only forſake him (as was obſerved before, *v.* 4. and XIV. 20.) but hate his company, as a diſgrace or a trouble to them; and therefore no wonder if his companions and familiars grow ſtrange to him: He urges them with their former proteſtations or promiſes of kindneſs, but finds they ſignified nothing; and if he earneſtly implore their pity, it is to no purpoſe.

Ver. 8. *He that getteth wiſdom, loveth his own ſoul: he that keepeth underſtanding, ſhall find good.*] He that is ſo conſiderate, as to value Wiſdom above Riches, and accordingly to ſtore his mind with vertuous principles, is the trueſt lover of himſelf: and if he ſtrictly obſerve them, and conduct his life by thoſe rules, he ſhall find the profit of it.

Ver. 9. *A falſe witneſs ſhall not be unpuniſhed, and* he that *ſpeaketh lyes, ſhall periſh.*] He that teſtifies to a lye, to the perverting of juſtice, if the Judge do not find him out, ſhall be puniſhed by GOD: and he who privately whiſpers ſlanders againſt his neighbours, and kindles ſtrife and contention among them, ſhall periſh by thoſe wicked practices.

Ver. 10. *Delight is not ſeemly for a fool: much leſs for a ſervant to have rule over princes.*] Pleaſure doth not become a man void of underſtanding; who is never more ridiculous than when he can do what he liſt: and yet Empire leſs becomes a vile Slave; who is moſt intolerably inſolent, when he can wantonly domineer over the greateſt perſons. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 11. *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to paſs over a tranſgreſſion.*] The world thinks him ſtupid, who is patient; and without ſenſe of honour who paſſes by injuries: but the more underſtanding any man hath, the ſlower he is to anger; and the greater his Spirit is, the greater his glory and praiſe, not to revenge a wrong, when he hath opportunity.

Ver. 12. *The king's wrath* is *as the roaring of a lion; but his favour* is *as dew upon the graſs.*] But none find it more difficult than a King, eſpecially in the heat of his youth, to bridle his wrath; the ſignification of which is as dreadful to his Subjects, as the roaring of the young Lyon to the reſt of the Beaſts: and on the other ſide, any token of his favour and kindneſs is ſo comfortable, that as the dew reſtores thoſe herbs, which were parched by the hot beams of the Sun; ſo it revives thoſe who were almoſt ſtruck dead with the terror of his rage. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 13. *A fooliſh ſon* is *the calamity of his father; and the contentions of a wife* are *a continual dropping.*] Two things make a man exceeding unhappy; a diſſolute Son, and a ſcolding Wife: for the former breaks the heart of his Father, to ſee him like to prove the utter deſtruction of his Family: and the other drives a man to undo his Family himſelf, when he is no more able to live at home with her, than to dwell in a rotten and ruinous houſe, through the roof of which the rain drops perpetually.

Ver. 14. *Houſe and riches* are *the inheritance of fathers; and a prudent wife* is *from the* LORD.] The ſingular Providence of GOD therefore is to be acknowledged in a vertuous Wife; which is not ſo eaſie to get as an eſtate. For an houſe, with all its furniture, and land belonging to it, may deſcend upon us, without our thought, from our progenitors: but great care and prudence is required in the choice of a Wife, that knows how to manage a Family aright; who is not found neither, without the peculiar direction and bleſſing of the LORD.

Ver. 15. *Slothfulneſs caſteth into a deep ſleep; and an idle ſoul ſhall ſuffer hunger.*] As labour makes men vigorous and rich, ſo ſloth and idleneſs

idleneſs hath theſe *two* miſerable effects: that it inſenſibly ſinks the mind into a dull ſtupidity and unconcernedneſs about the moſt neceſſary things; and thereby reduces them unto extreme beggary and want: To which may be added a *third*; that it tempts them to ſhirk, and uſe diſhoneſt arts for a livelihood.

Ver. 16. *He that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own ſoul; but he that deſpiſeth ways, ſhall die.*] He that carefully obſerves the commandments of God, as the rule of his life, hath a due care of himſelf, and conſults his Soul's ſafety: but he that minds not what he doth, deſpiſing all order and rules of life, is regardleſs of his own good, and will be very miſerable.

Ver. 17. *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the* Lord; *and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.*] He that takes compaſſion on the poor and relieves his neceſſities, doth not impoveriſh but inrich himſelf. For the Lord looks upon what is given to the poor as lent unto him: and he will not fail to make him a full compenſation; or rather return the benefit he hath done to others, with large intereſt and increaſe of bleſſings, upon him and his poſterity.

Ver. 18. *Chaſten thy ſon while there is hope, and let not thy ſoul ſpare for his crying.*] Give due and timely correction to thy Son for his faults, before he hath gotten an habit of them, and there be little hope of his amendment: but neither proceed to ſuch cruel uſage of him, as to make him weary of life, and not to care what becomes of him; nor yet be moved merely by his roaring to abate of thy neceſſary ſeverity towards him.

Ver. 19. *A man of great wrath ſhall ſuffer puniſhment: for if thou deliver* him, *yet thou muſt do it again.*] For he whoſe wrath exceeds all bounds, and makes him ſevere beyond meaſure, undoes his Child, and conſequently himſelf (nay all men that are immoderately angry bring great miſchiefs upon themſelves; and if you help them out of one danger, it doth not make them cautious, but they run into a new trouble) and yet if he do not puniſh him at all, he tempts him to go on in his ſin; and the ſame caſe, whether he ſhall puniſh him or no, will return again.

Ver. 20. *Hear counſel, and receive inſtruction, that thou mayſt be wiſe in thy latter end.*] Liſten unto good advice, and be not impatient of reproof; no nor of correction for thy faults: but receive all thankfully; and learn thereby that wiſdom which will do thee ſervice, when all things elſe will fail thee.

Ver. 21. There are *many devices in a man's heart; nevertheleſs the counſel of the* Lord, *that ſhall ſtand.*] There are many deſigns and contrivances in the minds of men, which they think are ſo well laid that they cannot miſcarry: but are all defeated by the over-ruling counſel of the Lord; which alone can inevitably bring to paſs whatſoever it pleaſes.

Ver. 22. *The deſire of a man* is *his kindneſs: and a poor man is better than a lyar.*] There is nothing more deſirable to a man, than to have wherewithal to be kind to others, and oblige his Friends and neighbours; for nothing makes him more beloved: But it is better to want this power, than to have it, and have no will to do good; no, not to thoſe to whom we have made great profeſſions and promiſes of love and kindneſs.

Ver. 23. *The fear of the* Lord tendeth *to life, and* he that hath it *ſhall abide ſatisfied: he ſhall not be viſited with evil.*] Nothing makes a man lead ſo happy a life as a religious care to pleaſe the Lord in all things; which is attended with abundance of bleſſings, but eſpecially with inward ſatisfaction of mind: which makes a man ſleep quietly and ſecurely; without fear of any evil that can invade him. *See* Arg. [g].

Ver. 24. *A ſlothful* man *hideth his hand in his boſom, and will not ſo much as bring it to his mouth again.*] All things ſeem ſo difficult to a lazy wretch, who indulges himſelf in ſloth, and loves his eaſe; that he would not willingly pull his hands from under his arms; no, not to put his meat into his mouth. *See* Arg. [*h*].

Ver. 25. *Smite a ſcorner, and the ſimple will beware; and reprove one that hath underſtanding,* and *he will underſtand knowledge.*] Puniſh a derider of Religion ſeverely; and though it do him no good, yet thoſe incautious perſons whom he hath deluded, will be awakened by it to greater circumſpection: but it is ſufficient only to chide a well-diſpoſed perſon for his faults; of which he himſelf will receive the benefit, and learn to amend them. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 26. *He that waſteth* his *father,* and *chaſeth away* his *mother,* is *a ſon that cauſeth ſhame, and bringeth reproach.*] A Son that leads a debauched life, too often waſtes all his Father's eſtate; and either turns his Mother out of doors, or makes her weary of the houſe: which is ſo diſgraceful, that it makes them aſhamed to ſhew their heads; and will bring him to greater confuſion at the laſt.

Ver. 27. *Ceaſe, my ſon, to hear the inſtruction* that cauſeth *to err from the words of knowledge.*] My Son, beware of their diſcourſe, who, under the ſhew of greater learning, ſeduce thee from the plain doctrines of Vertue; or if thou haſt been unhappily engaged in ſuch company, quit it preſently, and ſtick to thoſe that honeſtly inſtruct thee: for remember this; to leave off hearing the inſtruction of good men, is the firſt ſtep towards a departure from all Religion.

Ver. 28. *An ungodly witneſs ſcorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.*] A wicked witneſs, who hath perfectly diſcharged all ſenſe of good and evil, mocks if you tell him of Law and Juſtice, or of the judgment of God upon perjured perſons: for there is no iniquity ſo great, but there are men as lewdly impious; who not ſo much as boggle at it, but will ſwallow it down as glibly, as drunkards do their liquor. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 29. *Judgments are prepared for ſcorners, and ſtripes for the back of fools.*] But they ſhall not mock always; for terrible puniſhments ſhall certainly be inflicted upon thoſe that ſcoff at Conſcience and Religion: nor ſhall other wicked men eſcape, who are ſuch fools as to ſlight theſe good inſtructions; but feel at laſt to their ſmart, the doleful effects of their ſin, in indelible marks of the divine diſpleaſure.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *The first precept in this Chapter is against* Drunkenneſs, *as an enemy to Wiſdom, even in common things; much more in thoſe of everlaſting conſequence: For that it commonly expells out of mens minds all reverence both to* God, *and to others; inclining them to take the licence to ſay or do any thing without reſtraint or diſcretion; and what unruly paſſions it excites when the brain is diſturbed with it, is known to all, and need not be here recited. The word* Homeh *which* Solomon *here uſes, and which we render* raging *or outrageous, includes them all: ſignifying that diſcompoſed, unquiet and reſtleſs ſtate of mind, which expreſſes it ſelf in ſome wild motion or other, according as men are naturally inclined. But nothing worſe can be ſaid of it than this, that it makes men either ſtupid ſots, or profane ſcoffers at Religion and all ſobriety.*

[b] *Next to this he adviſes every man to take heed, how he ſuffers himſelf to be drunk with anger. For nothing elſe but an intoxication therewith, can make a man ſo diſtracted as to fly in the face of Majeſty. For ſo that word* hithabber *properly ſignifies, not to* provoke *the King (though moſt Interpreters, even* Bochartus *himſelf, ſo render it) but to* be angry *at him; which is a kind of madneſs: For thereby he is provoked to ſuch fury, as is in young Lyons, who are the fierceſt of all others. I have therefore expreſſed both ſenſes of the word.*

[c] *In the next verſe I take* iſh *to ſignifie a more than ordinary man; one of the higheſt rank; and that in Wiſdom: For it is oppoſed to a fool; and therefore ſo I have expounded it.*

[d] *As I have alſo underſtood it in* v. 5. *where* Solomon *obſerves that there are no men ſo cunning, but there are others as ſubtil to find them out. Concerning which art of finding out men, the Great Lord* Bacon *hath given many notable rules (in his* ſecond *Chapter of the VIII Book of the* Advancement of Learning) *for though the knowledge it ſelf falls not under precepts, becauſe it is of Individuals; yet inſtructions for the deducing of it may be given. And he obſerves* ſix *ways whereby the knowledge of men may be drawn out and diſcloſed. By their faces and countenances; by words; by deeds; by their nature; by their ends; and by the relations of others. What he ſays upon theſe heads, the Reader may there find. I ſhall only mention this ſingle obſervation of his; That* the weakeſt and ſimpleſt ſort of men, are beſt interpreted by their Natures *(according to which they commonly act)* but the wiſeſt and moſt reſerved, are beſt expounded by their ends and aims.

[e] *The next verſe is very variouſly expounded; but our Tranſlation ſeems to come neareſt to the ſenſe of the Hebrew words: Which may admit alſo of this conſtruction; which approaches nearer than any other, beſides that which we follow.* It is the common inclination of mankind, when they are in need or danger, to call for relief or help from him, whom they have obliged: but there are very few, that in ſuch a condition will approve themſelves to be faithful friends.

[f] *The* eleventh *verſe alſo may be expounded quite contrary ways. Becauſe the word* idnnakker *ſignifies both to* make one's ſelf known, *and to* make one's ſelf a ſtranger *unto others. All the ancient Interpreters follow, as ours doth, the firſt ſenſe; which ſeems moſt genuine; for Nature commonly betrays its inclinations in children ſo plainly, and they are ſo ſtrong and violent, that they cannot diſſemble them. Yet that (which is the other) is no abſurd ſenſe; which ſome give of theſe words,* Even children are ſo cunning, as to hide their inclinations: and therefore it is not eaſie to gueſs in their childhood, what they will prove when they come to man's eſtate. *But this is not ſo common as the other.*

[g] *The next verſe ſome good Interpreters expound wholly concerning the happineſs a people is in, when the ſubjects are ſo humble, that they are inclined meekly to obey their Superiours; and their Superiours ſo wiſe, that they ſollicitouſly provide for their ſafety and good Government. Thus* Melanchthon *obſerves, that in Government theſe two things muſt concurr; good Counſel in the Governors, and Obedience in the People: both of which* Solomon *acknowledges to be the gift of* God. *Nay, both theſe, ſaith he, muſt concurr in a King; who muſt not only have good counſellors, but be inclined alſo to hearken to them, or elſe he will not be happy.* Jeremiah *was an excellent Monitor, but* Zedekiah *would not be ruled by him; and ſo* Jeruſalem *was deſtroyed: as on the other ſide,* Hezekiah *in former times, hearkned to* Iſaiah; *and then it was preſerved.* Hæc eſt principalis ſententiæ hujus dulciſſimi dicti. *But I rather look upon this to be, that which they call a tropical ſenſe, not the literal; and therefore I only note it here, together with this wholeſome Admonition of that Author which follows:* That Kingdoms cannot be well governed only by humane Wiſdom; but the Aſſiſtance of God muſt be implored both in giving of counſel, and in bowing the will of men to Obedience, and in governing events.

[h] *The* fourteenth *verſe is alledged by the Lord* Bacon, *as an inſtance of one of the mere colours of good and evil: teaching us that all is not good which men praiſe; nor all bad which they diſcommend. For as* fraud, *the Wiſe man here obſerves, makes them diſpraiſe that, to which they have a mind; ſo in other caſes, out of* ignorance, *or out of* partiality, *or* faction, *nay, ſometimes from* natural diſpoſition, *men both diſparage that which is praiſe-worthy, and commend that which is good for little.*

But there are other Authors, who give a quite different ſenſe of theſe words; particularly Luther *and* Melanchthon: *who by* koneh *do not underſtand a* buyer; *but an* owner *or* poſſeſſor. *And imagine the meaning of this Proverb to be, that* men are not wont to like that which they enjoy; but after God hath taken it away from them, then they commend the happineſs they have loſt. *The laſt named Writer, heaps up abundance of excellent ſentences out of the Ancients, like this of* Thucydides, οὐδὲν τὸ παρὸν ἄχθος, the preſent is always grievous. *Which ariſes out of fickleneſs and inconſtancy; or becauſe they are cloyed with what they have long enjoyed; or are impatient of ſome inconveniencies in their preſent ſtate; but chiefly out of inconſideration, that all*

conditions

conditions will have ſomething troubleſome in them; and out of great unthankfulneſs to God, *and inſenſibleneſs of his Providence, which diſpoſes things better than we can do our ſelves. But the word* jithhallel, *which we tranſlate* boaſt, *ſcarce admits of this ſenſe; and therefore I have not taken notice of it in the Paraphraſe.*

[l] *Whether* peninim *in the next verſe, ſignifies Rubies, or Pearls, or any other ſort of precious ſtone, or none in particular, is not very material: but* Bochart *I think hath demonſtrated that it ſignifies Pearls (Part II. L. V. C. 6.* de Sacr. An.) *And therefore I have ſo tranſlated it. And it is not an impertinent argument, which he alledges for this (cap. 8.) that Wiſdom in the Scripture is frequently compared to Pearls, or preferred before them; as it is here in this place.*

[k] *In the* ſeventeenth *verſe, under the name of* bread of deceit, *may be comprehended all things got wrongfully: which though they may pleaſe a man in the beginning, will bring ſorrow and pain in the concluſion: and therefore ſo I have expreſſed it in the Paraphraſe.*

[l] *There is little difficulty in the verſes that follow till we come to the 25th verſe. Where the vulgar Latin hath been ſo extremely corrupted, that various interpretations have thence ariſen of a very plain ſentence, as the words run in the Hebrew. Which are directed againſt* Sacrilege, *as* Proteſtant *Writers univerſally acknowledge.* A corruption *(ſaith Mr.* Cartwright *himſelf)* which never more infeſted the World than in this age: in which moſt men, not only give nothing; but do all they can to take away from that which their Anceſtors have given to the ſervice of God, and the ſupport of his Miniſters, of Schools, or of the Poor. By which they are guilty not only of their own deſtruction; but of the loſs of the ſouls of others. *The only difference between them herein is, that ſome take the words to be a cenſure of the* hypocritical wickedneſs *of ſuch, as after they have committed ſacrilege, and ſuch like ſins, think to make* God *an amends by Vows, and Sacrifices and Prayers.*

Thus Luther *and* Melanchthon, *and among the Reformed (as they are called)* de Dieu, *who adds this new conjecture, that the firſt word* Mokeſch *may be interpreted* by a ſnare, i. e. *fraudulently and craftily; and then the ſenſe is this:* A ſacrilegious man finds devices to rob God, of things that are conſecrated to him: and then makes vows, in hopes by them to expiate his ſacrilege. *The whole ſentence he alſo obſerves may be otherways diſpoſed: but it ſeems to be ſo forced and unuſual that I ſhall not mention it.*

[m] *The like variety of interpretations, the miſtake of the vulgar Latin hath produced in the next verſe. Which ſeems to intend no more than this, That* a Good King ſeparates the bad from the good, by a due execution of his Laws: which is like the winnowing of the corn, after the chaff is ſeparated from it, by drawing the wheel over it. *For as the flail is the inſtrument among us of beating the corn out of the huſk; ſo in thoſe hot Countries, they made this ſeparation by a wheel drawn by Oxen over it: which both preſſed out the Corn, and brake the ſtraw; as may be ſeen in XXVIII* Iſa. 27, 28. *and many other places, which our learned Countryman* N. Fuller *hath explained in his* Miſcellanies *(L. VI. Ch. 12.) and Dr.* Hammon *hath applied to that place of the Pſalmiſt LXXVIII* Pſ. 13. *though it ſeemed to me there, to have another meaning.*

Others by the wheel *underſtand here ſuch a ſore puniſhment as that mention'd* 2 Sam. *VIII. 2. XII.* 31. *and then the meaning is,* He will uſe the utmoſt rigour to extirpate the wicked, and fright men from their wickedneſs.

[n] *The plaineſt ſenſe alſo of* v. 27. *ſeems to be that in our Tranſlation: the latter part of which the Lord* Bacon *(with ſome others) referr to the inquiſitive ſearch of man's mind into all manner of things.* " *For though the Wiſe man ſays (in the* " *III* Eccleſiaſtes) *that it is impoſſible for man* " *to find out all the Works of* God; *yet this* " *doth not derogate from the capacity of man's* " *mind, but may be referred to the impediments* " *of knowledge (ſuch as the ſhortneſs of life,* " *janglings among learned men, and refuſing to* " *join to their Studies and Labours, unfaithful and* " *depraved tradition of Sciences, with many o-*" *ther inconveniencies, wherein this preſent ſtate* " *is intangled) for that no parcel of the world is* " *denied to man's enquiry or invention, he declares* " *in another place; where he ſaith,* the Spirit " of man is as the lamp of God; wherewith " he ſearcheth into the inwards of all ſecrets. *Thus he in the beginning of his* Advancement of Learning. *Which, if it be not the full import of the words, is nearer than that ſenſe which others give of them; who by the* candle of the Lord, *underſtand either the knowledge of* God *himſelf, which penetrates into the ſecrets of all mens thoughts; or elſe his divine favour and love; the ſenſe of which marvelloufly recreates and refreſhes the ſoul; and is as it were the life of man, penetrating through his whole body.*

[o] *Upon the next verſe* Kab-venaki *hath this note; that by* cheſed, *the* mercy, *which* Solomon *here commends unto a King, we are to underſtand, an exceeding great exceſs of goodneſs, and kindneſs; even towards thoſe who are not worthy of it: and by* Emeth *truth, his keeping his word exactly, and loving and ſincerely practiſing this vertue. Which two will keep him from all harm; but it is that exceſſive degree of goodneſs alone; which eſtabliſhes and ſettles him in the throne of his Kingdom. A Proverb directly contrary to the wicked Maxims of* Matchiavel, *as* Schickard *obſerves in his* Miſchpat Hammelech, *Cap. IV.*

[p] *The laſt verſe ſome take to be a deſcription of the depraved condition of humane Nature; which makes men as loth to be cured of their ſins, by ſharp and ſevere rebukes, &c. as to be beaten till lumps be raiſed in the fleſh, &c. So they make* Tamrickbere, *the* cleanſing *or ſcouring* of an evil man, *to be the ſubject of which he ſpeaks. And then the Paraphraſe ſhould run thus,* To rub up a wicked man, and chide him ſoundly for his ſins; is as grievous to him as to beat him till he be bruiſed; and ſo ſore, that he complains his very bowels are hurt and in anguiſh by it. *This I have not wholly neglected; but yet followed the common expoſition: which is, that* the ſevereſt corporal puniſhments, are neceſſary for the cure of ſome offenders.

1. WINE is *a mocker, ſtrong drink* is *raging: and whoſoever is deceived thereby, is not wiſe.*] Let him whoſe deſign it is to be wiſe and good, take heed of accuſtoming himſelf to exceſs of Wine, and ſuch like liquors; which is inconſiſtent with it: For drunkenneſs not only diſpoſes a man to be abuſive and ſcurrilous, in deriding even things moſt ſerious and ſacred; but to be ſo furious, tumultuous and quarrelſome, as declares him both to be a fool, and uncapable of being otherwiſe. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *The fear of a King* is as *the roaring of a Lion:* whoſo *provoketh him to anger, ſinneth* againſt *his own ſoul.*] The diſpleaſure of a King ſtrikes terror into men, and makes them tremble, as they are wont to do at the roaring of a young Lion, which comes with open jaws to devour them: It is beſt therefore to ſubmit to him; for whoſoever provokes him, eſpecially by angry and exaſperating language, brings his own life (as well as his ſoul) into very great danger. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. It is *an honour for a man to ceaſe from ſtrife: but every fool will be meddling*] It is below a wiſe man, or one that is truly great, to ſcold and brawl; or if a quarrel be begun, it is no diſparagement to him (but the nobleſt thing he can do) to withdraw himſelf from it, and let it reſt: but all fools and lewd perſons love to thruſt themſelves into contention; and fanſie, when they are engaged in ſtrife, they are bound in honour to maintain it. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *The ſluggard will not plow by reaſon of the cold*; therefore *ſhall he beg in harveſt, and* have *nothing.*] The ſmalleſt difficulty frights a lazy perſon from the moſt neceſſary undertaking; for inſtance, he will not riſe to plough his ground in Autumn, when the morning air grows ſharp, for fear of catching cold: by which means he expoſes himſelf to far greater hardſhips; for in the harveſt time, when plenty crowns the labours of other men, he turns beggar, and no body pities him, or will relieve him.

Ver. 5. *Counſel in the heart of man* is like *deep water: but a man of underſtanding will draw it out.*] There is nothing but may be compaſſed by Wiſdom. For tho' the deſigns and intentions of another man, eſpecially that hath a deep wit, are as hard to be ſounded as Waters that lie in the ſecret Caverns of the Earth: yet there are perſons of ſuch penetrating underſtandings, and of ſo great a reach, that they will find means to diſcover them and draw them out. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 6. *Moſt men will proclaim every one his own goodneſs: but a faithful man who can find?*] It is ſuch an honour to be kind and to do good to others, that a great part of mankind value themſelves very much upon the mere pretence of it; every one of them boaſting what he hath done, or will do upon occaſion: though, alas! in a time of trial, it is very hard to find ſo much as one of them that will be as good as his word. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 7. *The juſt* man *walketh in his integrity: his children* are *bleſſed after him.*] But whoſoever he be, that is indued with this rare vertue of being juſt to his word; and ſo ſincerely charitable, that he perſevereth in his vertue to the end of his days; he ſhall not only fare the better for it, and enjoy great ſatisfaction in himſelf, while he lives; but his children after him ſhall reap the happy fruits of his unfeigned love to GOD and man.

Ver. 8. *A king that ſitteth in the throne of judgment, ſcattereth away all evil with his eyes.*] A Prince attentive to his People's good, who doth not give up himſelf to pleaſure, nor abandon all his care of the affairs to his Miniſters, but ſits conſtantly himſelf to do juſtice to his people; prevents a world of miſchief by his very preſence in the courts of judgments: and by his ſtrict obſervance how things are carried, and careful ſearch into mens cauſes, keeps both Judges and Pleaders, and all men elſe within the bounds of their duty; and applies fitting and ſeaſonable remedies to all the publick grievances.

Ver. 9. *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?*] There is no man ſo perfect, that he hath nothing left to do; for who can ſay, and ſay truly, that he hath not the leaſt evil affection remaining in him, no unruly paſſion ſtirring in his ſoul? Or that he is ſo free from every ſin, that he needs no further purifying?

Ver. 10. *Divers weights*, and *divers meaſures, both of them* are *alike abomination to the* LORD.] It is not ſo ſmall a ſin as men imagine, to cheat and cozen their neighbours; for inſtance, to buy by a weight or a meaſure too heavy and big, and to ſell by thoſe that are too light and ſcanty: for theſe are alike diſpleaſing to the LORD; nay, ſuch injuſtice is deteſtible to him beyond expreſſion.

Ver. 11. *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work* be *pure, and whether it* be *right.*] It is not hard to give a ſhrewd conjecture, what a child is like to prove when he is a man: For not only youths, but little children, make early diſcoveries by their behaviour, by their contrivances, by their dealings one with another; nay, by their very ſports and paſtimes, and ſuch things wherein they delight, whether their future life will probably be modeſt and honeſt; free, that is, from laſciviouſneſs, impurity, and ſuch like vices; and void alſo of fraud, and guile, and malignity of ſpirit. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 12. *The hearing ear, and the ſeeing eye, the* LORD *hath made even both of them.*] As the LORD is to be acknowledged the fountain of all good; particularly of thoſe excellent and uſeful ſenſes whereby the knowledge of all things is conveyed to us: So the towardly diſpoſition which we obſerve to be in any child, to liſten to inſtruction, and a clear underſtanding to diſcern, with a ſound judgment to reſolve aright, are likewiſe, above all things, to be peculiarly aſcribed to the divine Grace. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 13. *Love not ſleep, leſt thou come to poverty: open thine eyes*, and *thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with bread.*] But our Induſtry muſt be joined with GOD's bleſſing, in the faithful improvement of thoſe faculties, or good inclinations he hath given us. And therefore let not idleneſs make thee indulge thy ſelf in too much ſleep; which is the way to beggary: but get up betime, and apply thy ſelf, with attentive care, to ſome honeſt labour; and then thy deſire of all things neceſſary ſhall not want ſatisfaction.

Ver. 14. It is *naught, it is naught, ſaith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boaſteth.*] The buyer ſometimes is as unjuſt and deceitful as the ſeller (*v.* 10.) for when he cheapens a commodity, he diſparages it to ſuch a degree, as if he thought it nothing worth: but having purchaſed it, upon his own terms, he goes away and brags how ſubtil he was; and laughs at the ſimplicity of him that ſold it at ſo vile a rate. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 15. *There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge* are *a precious jewel.*] Some think themſelves rich, and powerful, and happy, becauſe they have treaſures of Gold, or perhaps heaps of Pearls, or other precious Stones: but among all the Jewels, or Ornaments, or Furniture that are moſt eſteemed, there is none comparable unto true Wiſdom; eſpecially joined with Eloquence; which can do more than them all. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 16. *Take his garment that is ſurety* for *a ſtranger: and take a pledge of him for a ſtrange woman.*] It is rank folly to truſt him, who is ſo raſh as to be bound for one, whoſe ability and fidelity is utterly unknown to him; eſpecially for a woman whoſe looſe way of life, makes her credit juſtly ſuſpected: therefore have nothing to do with ſuch an inconſiderate perſon, without the utmoſt ſecurity that he can give thee, for the payment of what he owes thee.

Ver. 17. *Bread of deceit* is *ſweet to a man: but afterwards his mouth ſhall be filled with gravel.*] Do not ſatisfie thy appetite of wealth by fraud, lying or bribery; nor thy deſires of pleaſure by adultery or fornication: For though this may be ſweet for the preſent, it is but like the pleaſure of greety bread, which may reliſh well to an hungry man, when it is firſt taſted; but being chewed, hurts the palate, cuts the gums, or breaks the teeth, with the ſharp and rough gravel that is in it. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 18. Every *purpoſe is eſtabliſhed by counſel: and with good advice make war.*] Raſhneſs ſpoils the beſt deſigns; which muſt be carried on prudently and with good advice, if we would have them prove ſucceſsful: and above all other, war-like expeditions are not to be undertaken without great deliberation; nor can be well managed without exact conduct, and ſubtil contrivance: unto which the Victory is commonly more to be aſcribed, than unto force.

Ver. 19. *He that goeth about as a tale-bearer, revealeth ſecrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.*] He whoſe trade it is to ingratiate himſelf by defaming others, will not ſtick moſt treacherouſly to diſcover the ſecrets wherewith they have intruſted him (XI. 13.) Therefore ſuſpect a fawning fellow, and have no familiarity with him; for his drift is, to intice thee to talk, what he intends to carry about to others.

Ver. 20. *Whoſo curſeth his father or his mother, his lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſs.*] He that not only ſlights and deſpiſes, but reproaches, and wiſhes miſchief to his Father or Mother, ſhall bring the heavieſt puniſhments on himſelf, and on his poſterity: who, the happier they were before, ſhall be the more miſerable, by falling from a flouriſhing, into the moſt diſmal condition.

Ver. 21. *An inheritance* may be *gotten haſtily at the beginning: but the end thereof ſhall not be bleſſed.*] Make not too much haſte to be rich; for though with a great deal of buſtle and ſtir, an eſtate may in a ſhort time be heaped up; yet the foundation of it being laid in rapine, extortion, or fraud, it moulders away many times as ſuddenly as it was gotten; and it is certain will not proſper unto many generations.

Ver. 22. *Say not thou, I will recompence evil:* but *wait on the* LORD, *and he ſhall ſave thee.*] Be patient, and do not ſo much as reſolve to take revenge for any injury thou haſt received (of which thou art not the proper judge, nor like to do exact juſtice in it) but leave thy cauſe to the LORD, and expect his righteous ſentence: believing ſtedfaſtly he will not only do thee right, but defend thee from farther injuries; which thou fanſieſt, perhaps, thou ſhalt invite by thy forgiving thoſe that are paſt.

Ver. 23. *Divers weights are an abomination unto the* LORD: *and a falſe balance is not good.*] To buy by one weight and to ſell by another, is extremely odious not only to all honeſt men, but much more to the LORD: which was ſaid before (*v.* 10.) but is a ſin ſo heinous, and yet ſo commonly practiſed, that this is fit to be repeated again; that it is a moſt wicked thing to cheat another, though it be but in a little matter (*v.* XI. 1.)

Ver. 24. *Man's goings* are *of the* LORD, *how can a man then underſtand his own way?*] There is no man, great or ſmall, that can take one ſtep towards any thing he deſigns, without the permiſſion and direction alſo of the LORD: who over-rules their motions unto ends ſo far diſtant from mens thoughts, that it is impoſſible for them to know what the event ſhall be, of any thing they undertake.

Ver. 25. It is *a ſnare to the man* who *devoureth that which is holy: and after vows to make enquiry.*] There are two pieces of prophaneneſs, which intangle him that is guilty of them, in great troubles; nay, bring ruin upon them. *Firſt*, when he makes no diſtinction between things holy and common; but converts that which was conſecrated to GOD (the firſt-fruits, ſuppoſe, or ſuch like ſacred things) to his own proper uſe: And *ſecondly*, when he vows in his diſtreſs, to give ſomething unto GOD; but having obtained his deſires, ſtudies how he may be looſed from his obligations. *See* Arg. [*l*].

Ver. 26. *A wiſe king ſcattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.*] Such impious perſons can no more ſtand before a religious Prince, than the chaff before the wind: but he diſperſes them all, and thraſhes them (as we ſpeak) ſo ſeverely, that the Country is clean purged, and freed from ſuch wicked wretches. *See* Arg. [*m*].

Ver. 27. *The ſpirit of man* is *the candle of the* LORD, *ſearching all the inward parts of the belly.*] That active ſpirit, which the LORD hath breathed into man, is like a torch lighted at the divine underſtanding, to guide and direct him in all his motions; and to make reflections upon them afterward: nay, to penetrate alſo into the moſt ſecret deſigns of other men, that he may not be deceived by them. *See* Arg. [*n*].

Ver. 28.

Ver. 28. *Mercy and truth preſerve the King: and his throne is upholden by mercy.*] The beſt and ſtrongeſt Guards for the preſervation of a Prince's Perſon, and for the ſecurity of his Government; are bounty and clemency, joined with juſtice and faithfulneſs to his Word: and if either of the two be of greater force than the other, for their ſupport and maintenance, it is an high degree of bounty and benignity; which ſettles him faſt in all mens affections, and intails the kingdom upon his poſterity. *See* Arg. [*o*].

Ver. 29. *The glory of young men is their ſtrength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.*] That which makes young men honoured is their ſtrength, and vigour, and courage; whereby they are capable to ſerve for the defence of their Country: but that which makes old men venerable is their aged gravity and experience, which qualifies them to adviſe and conſult for its ſafety.

Ver. 30. *The blueneſs of a wound cleanſeth away evil: ſo do ſtripes the inward parts of the belly.*] It is impoſſible to mend ſome perſons without blows; and thoſe not gentle neither, but ſevere: And therefore though it be a very ſharp and grievous remedy, which they by all means avoid, it muſt not be forborn; but they are rather to be beaten black and blue, and ſcourged till their very hearts ake, than not be cleanſed from their impurity. *See* Arg. [*p*].

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins with a Sentence, which Themiſtius, *a Pagan Philoſopher and Orator, ſeems to have notice of, and mentions as very memorable in the* Aſſyrian *(as he is ſuppoſed to call the* Hebrew*) Writings: and commends to the thoughts of the Emperor* Valens, *in a ſpeech he made to him,* Orat. *IX. But if he had reſpect to this Proverb of* Solomon's, *he will not fully comprehend the ſenſe of it; for he takes notice only of a Prince's mind being in the cuſtody, and under the guard of* God. *For thus he tranſlates it,* ἐνῦς τῦ Βασιλέως τὸ τῆ Θεῦ παλάμη διεφυλάχθαι, the mind of the King is kept in ſafe cuſtody in the hand of God. *From whence he draws this Inference, that a King ought to be very ſenſible what danger he is in, if he go about any thing contrary to the mind of* God; *becauſe he then is in peril to fall out of the hand, which preſerves and keeps him. Nay, thou oughteſt, O King, (ſaith he) not only to deſign nothing thy ſelf, but what is holy; but they that are about thee ought to ſpeak to thee nothing that is not ſo: For every word that comes to thy ears is written in his uncorrupted hand. But though this be a moſt excellent Admonition, worthy to be written in the hearts of all Princes,* that it is very unbecoming to have any evil thing, any thing impure, or in the leaſt blemiſhed with cruelty or inhumanity, in that heart, which thoſe moſt holy and moſt gracious and benign hands of God, carry in their keeping; *yet there is a great deal more than theſe* Aſſyrian *Letters or Pictures, which he ſpeaks of, expreſs. For* Solomon *would have them, and us; ſenſible that* they cannot manage things by their power, as they think good; *but depend upon an higher cauſe, who orders all their motions, good and bad, to ſuch ends as he propoſes to himſelf; quite contrary to their intentions and inclinations. Which is an Inſtruction ſufficient* to correct the pride of the moſt abſolute Monarch, and the Impatience of the moſt oppreſſed Subject.

[b] *Next to which follows* (v. 2.) *a caution againſt thinking too well of our ſelves: which had been delivered before* (*XVI.* 2.) *but for the weightineſs, I ſuppoſe, of the matter, and the proneneſs of men to flatter themſelves, and not to judge ſincerely of their own actions, is here again repeated.*

And then there is a caution added (v. 3.) *againſt Hypocriſie; which thinks to pleaſe* God *with ceremonies, without moral honeſty.*

[c] *In the* fourth *verſe the meaning is ſomething uncertain, from the different acceptions of the word* ner *or* nir: *which the* Greek, *the* Latin, *and other Interpreters tranſlate not* ploughing, *or* ploughed fields; *but the* light, *the* ſplendour *of the wicked. I have had reſpect to both ſenſes; underſtanding by* ploughing, *the ſtudy, contrivance and buſineſs of wicked men. And the Sentence may be inverted in this manner:* ſin is the pride, the ambition, the glory and joy (*or the* buſineſs) of wicked men, *That, upon which they value themſelves, and for which they think themſelves brave fellows,* &c. *is, that they dare do wickedly: or we may make two Sentences of this verſe, to this purpoſe;* men that have proud and lofty thoughts, have very ambitious deſires and an unſatiable appetite; which put them upon much wickedneſs: nay, the very buſineſs and employment of all wicked men (as well as their pleaſure) is nothing but ſin. *And this word* ner *ſignifying a* yoke, *among the* Chaldæans, Syrians *and* Arabians, Lud. de Dieu *thinks this no improper ſenſe:* ſuperciliouſneſs, and ſwelling of the heart (*or mind*) is a yoke intolerable; and proper to the wicked. Caſtalio *alone underſtands by* ſin, *the effects of ſin, to this ſenſe:* pride and haughtineſs of mind are deadly enemies to that happineſs and pleaſure which the wicked purſue: *for inſtead of making them greater as they fanſie, they lay them low in all mens opinions, and expoſe them to their hatred,* &c. *I omit other Interpretations.*

[d] *In the* ſeventh *verſe there are different opinions about the force of the word* jegorem: *moſt of which I have endeavoured to expreſs in the Paraphraſe. And there is no little obſcurity in the next verſe: but beſides that ſenſe which I have repreſented, the words are capable of another, which is as plain; viz.* as the man is, ſo are his works; a man of tricks will act ſtrangely (quite different from all the rules whereby we ought to govern our ſelves) but an honeſt man, you may know where to have; for he acts conformable to the Laws of righteouſneſs.

[e] *In the* eleventh *verſe,* de Dieu *thinks both parts of it ought to be referred to one and the ſame ſubject, viz.* peti, *the* ſimple: *who, ſaith* Solomon *(according to this conſtruction of the words) may be inſtructed two ways. One is, by the puniſhments which are inflicted upon a Scorner, which works upon his fear: the other*

is,

is, when he attends to the wiſe, and obſerves God's *great goodneſs to him; which works upon his love. Wherein he ſeems to have reſpect alſo to another ſignification of the word* bemaſchil, *beſides that of attending to information and inſtruction: for it ſometimes imports that happineſs and proſperity, wherewith* God *bleſſes the wiſe and prudent. But that ſenſe which I have followed in the Paraphraſe, ſeems neareſt to the Hebrew: and agrees beſt with what was ſaid before, XIX.* 25. *And it being uſual, in this Book, to repeat the ſame Sentence in divers places, in different words; I have therefore kept to that ſenſe. But if any like the other (which the Vulgar Lat. alſo follows, making both parts of the Sentence to reſpect* the ſimple) *the plaineſt interpretation of the latter part of it, ſeems to me to be this:* when Inſtruction is given to the wiſe, the ſimple alſo learn ſomething; by obſerving how diligently even the wiſe hearken to it. *And in this ſenſe the word* Maſchil, *with* lamed *after it, is uſed in the next verſe;* the juſt conſiders the houſe of the wicked.

[f] *Which, though it ſeem very plain, yet there are great varieties in the interpretation of it: becauſe of the following part of the verſe. In which many put in the word* Jehovah, *or* God, *to ſupply the ſenſe (as we do) but without any neceſſity; there being a clear and obvious ſenſe, (which I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe) without any ſuch ſupplement; if we do but take the* juſt man *for a juſt Magiſtrate, and not for a private perſon.*

[g] *There is little difficulty after this, till we come to the 24th verſe; where he either gives this character of a Scorner, that he is proud and arrogant, and does all things in the* wrath of his pride *(as the words are in the Hebrew) or deſcribes the proud and arrogant man to be a Scorner alſo, and full of haughty wrath. It is not of much concern which way we take it; for the ſenſe will, in a manner, be the ſame. I have expreſſed the Hebrew, as near as I could, in my Paraphraſe; taking the conſtruction thus:* A proud and haughty perſon, who may well be called a ſcorner, proceeds furiouſly and unſufferably in all that he doth.

[h] *In the laſt verſe* Solomon *mentions the* Horſe *inſtead of all warlike preparations: becauſe it was the chief; and all nations placed much of their confidence in the number and ſtrength of their Horſes. But that the Iſraelites might not do ſo too, there was a ſpecial proviſion made in their Law againſt it, XVII.* Deut. 16. *Notwithſtanding which, they were ſo prone to this vain confidence, that* Joſhua *in his Wars againſt the* Canaanites *houghed all the Horſes he took after a great Victory: that is, cut their hamſtrings, and thereby made them unſerviceable: which he did by an expreſs command from* God, *XI.* Joſh. 6, 9. *and the reaſon of it was, (as* Kimchi *well obſerves) to prevent a falſe conceit which might have riſen in the peoples mind; that they owed their good ſucceſs to them, had they made uſe of thoſe Horſes in future Battles. Which* Solomon *alſo here endeavours to prevent: For, though he had a great number of Horſes to increaſe that ſplendour which was peculiar to him, above all Kings; yet he would have them know he did not truſt in them; nor would have the people imagine they were a whit the more ſecure, becauſe they were ſo well appointed for War, if they did not carefully obey the Laws of* God; *and from him look for deliverance.*

1. *THE king's heart* is *in the hand of the* Lord, as *the rivers of water: he turneth it whitherſoever he will.*] It is not in the power of Kings (much leſs of other men) either to do, or to deſign, what they pleaſe; but their very wills are ſubject to the great Lord of all; who diverts them as eaſily from what they intend, or inclines them to that which they reſolve againſt; as the Gardiner draws the ſtreams of water through the trenches he cuts, unto what part of the ground he thinks good. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Every way of a man* is *right in his own eyes: but the* Lord *pondereth the hearts.*] There is nothing that a man doth or deſigns (eſpecially if he be great and potent) but ſuch is the fond affection he hath for himſelf, he fanſies to be exactly good: when in the account of the Lord, who ſearches into the ſecrets of mens Souls, and knows the juſt value of every thing, they are very defective, if not groſsly wicked. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *To do juſtice and judgment,* is *more acceptable to the* Lord *then ſacrifice.*] Men imagine, for example, that their devotion towards God, will ſatisfie for their breach of faith, their uncharitableneſs and injurious actions towards men: when he preferrs the practice of Truth, of Mercy and Juſtice before the richeſt Sacrifices that can be offered to him.

Ver. 4. *An high look, and a proud heart,* and *the plowing of the wicked,* is *ſin.*] The pride, the inſolence, the ambition and vaſt deſires; nay, all the deſigns and contrivances of wicked men, with all the proſperous ſucceſſes they have in them, lead them into abundance of ſins; and in the iſſue into no leſs miſeries. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 5. *The thoughts of the diligent* tend *only to plenteouſneſs: but of every one* that is *haſty, only to want.*] He that to prudent counſels and contrivances adds an honeſt diligence, is likely to grow rich: but he that acts inconſiderately in his buſineſs, or greedily catches at every advantage, whether by right or wrong: or undertakes more than he can manage, out of an eager deſire to grow rich preſently, is moſt likely to be a beggar.

Ver. 6. *The getting of treaſures by a lying tongue,* is *a vanity toſſed to and fro of them that ſeek death.*] There are men that make it their buſineſs, with much labour, to heap up wealth, tho' it be by lying, or flattery, or calumny, or perjury: but as ſuch treaſures are no more durable than heaps of chaff, or clouds of ſmoak, which are ſoon diſſipated by the wind; ſo they expoſe the owners of them to many dangers, and at laſt bring them, by their own diligence, to a woful end.

Ver. 7. *The robbery of the wicked ſhall deſtroy them; becauſe they refuſe to do judgment.*] For the rapine of ſuch wicked men, whereby they have deſtroyed other Families and made them deſolate, ſhall fall in moſt grievous and dreadful puniſhments upon themſelves; which they ſhall not be able to ſhake off, till they be utterly deſtroyed;

deſtroyed; becauſe they knowingly injured their neighbours, and obſtinately denied to make them ſatisfaction.

Ver. 8. *The way of man* is *froward and ſtrange; but* as for *the pure, his work* is *right.*] For a man whoſe life is nothing but wilineſs and craft, impoſture and deceit, is ſo alienated from GOD, that he is very odious to him, and to all good men: but he that is ſincere and free from all fraud and guile, approves himſelf in all his actions, and is moſt acceptable and dear to both. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 9. It is *better to dwell in a corner of the houſe-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide houſe.*] It is much more deſirable to live poorly and ſolitarily in the open air, expoſed to all the injuries of the weather; nay, to be thruſt into a little corner, on the top of the houſe; than to have a ſpacious habitation and numerous family, governed by a contentious wife: whoſe perpetual ſcolding and brawling within doors, upon the leaſt occaſion, is more intolerable than the thunder and the lightning, and bluſtering winds, which may moleſt him without.

Ver. 10. *The ſoul of the wicked deſireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.*] An impious man is ſo ſet upon miſchief, that he is not ſatisfied till he hath effected his deſire: nor will he ſpare either Friend or Foe, to ſerve his ambition, his covetouſneſs, or whatſoever evil affection it is that reigns in him.

Ver. 11. *When the ſcorner is puniſhed, the ſimple is made wiſe: and when the wiſe is inſtructed, he receiveth knowledge.*] Lay a heavy fine or other puniſhment, upon a derider of Religion; and tho' it do him no good, yet ſuch ſimple perſons as were only incautiouſly deluded by him, will make ſome wiſe reflections on it, and be the better for it: as for him that is wiſe already, it is ſufficient only to give him good admonitions; of which he himſelf will receive the profit, and amend what is amiſs in him. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 12. *The righteous* man *wiſely conſidereth the houſe of the wicked:* but GOD *overthroweth the wicked for* their *wickedneſs.*] A juſt Judge makes a prudent, but ſtrict ſcrutiny, into all the actions of a wicked man's family; that he may ſo puniſh them for their rapine, violence and extortion; as to deprive them of all power to do any further miſchief. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 13. *Whoſo ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he alſo ſhall cry himſelf, but ſhall not be heard.*] He who is ſo far from relieving the poor, though they lie under moſt grievous calamities, that he plainly declares their petitions are very troubleſome to him; ſhall fall into the like ſtraits and preſſures himſelf: and which is worſe, be denied when they force him to cry for help.

Ver. 14. *A gift in ſecret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the boſom, ſtrong wrath.*] Men do not love to be thought ſo weak, as to do any thing for money; but ſuch is its power, if it be ſecretly conveyed, that they will reſign their ſtrongeſt reſentments to it: their anger, for inſtance, will yield to a gift; nay, a rich preſent, prudently placed, will extinguiſh that wrath, which was thought implacable.

Ver. 15. It is *joy to the juſt to do judgment: but deſtruction* ſhall be *to the workers of iniquity.*] The execution of juſtice is a joy to him that hath obſerved the Laws; but a terror to thoſe that have violated them by their wicked deeds: who look upon themſelves as in danger to be undone thereby.

Ver. 16. *The man that wandreth out of the way of underſtanding, ſhall remain in the congregation of the dead.*] He that will not live by thoſe wiſe Laws which GOD hath preſcribed him, but follows the conduct of his own fooliſh luſts and paſſions, ſhall after all his extravagancies be ſent down to hell; and there confined to the company of the old Giants: who giving themſelves over to debauched courſes, were ſwept away with a deluge. (*See* II. 18. IX. 18.)

Ver. 17. *He that loveth pleaſure* ſhall be *a poor man: he that loveth wine and oyl ſhall not be rich.*] Nay, before he goes thither he may ſuffer very much; for it is too frequently ſeen that voluptuous men deſtroy their own pleaſures, by waſting their eſtates, and bringing themſelves to extreme beggary: at the beſt, he can never thrive, who loves to feaſt, and to live delicately.

Ver. 18. *The wicked* ſhall be *a ranſom for the righteous: and the tranſgreſſor for the upright.*] Nay, ſuch is the diſtinction which divine Providence makes between the good and bad, that righteous men are not only ſtrangely delivered from thoſe dangers which others fall into; but preſerved from miſchief, by its ſeizing on the wicked: and men ſincerely vertuous, eſcape in a common calamity; when they that prevaricate with GOD and with Religion, by that very means (which they thought was beſt for their ſafety) are overwhelmed in it.

Ver. 19. It is *better to dwell in the wilderneſs, than with a contentious and angry woman.*] It is more eligible (as was ſaid before, *v.* 9.) to dwell quietly, in the moſt ruful place upon earth, than to live in a palace with a contentious wife: whom nothing can pleaſe; but is uneaſie and angry at every thing, and always gives provoking language.

Ver. 20. There is *a treaſure to be deſired, and oyl in the dwelling of the wiſe: but a fooliſh man ſpendeth it up.*] Wiſdom furniſhes a man not only with the neceſſaries, but with all the conveniencies and pleaſures of life, that he can reaſonably deſire; which it teaches him alſo to enjoy with great ſatisfaction, though but in a ſmall habitation; but ſuch is the folly of a wicked man, that he laviſhly ſpends all thoſe treaſures, which he knows not how to get, nor how to live without.

Ver. 21. *He that followeth after righteouſneſs and mercy, findeth life, righteouſneſs and honour.*] He that makes it his buſineſs to be good; not contenting himſelf merely with doing no harm, but greedily laying hold on all occaſions to exerciſe juſtice and mercy, ſhall lead a moſt happy life: for, beſides the ſatisfaction and pleaſure he hath in doing good, he ſhall preſerve himſelf from being injured; and oblige all to be kind to him; and be highly eſteemed, honoured and praiſed every where.

Ver. 22. *A wiſe* man *ſcaleth the city of the mighty, and caſteth down the ſtrength of the confidence*

confidence thereof.] The vertue of the mind is of greater force, and more prevalent than ſtrength of body; For a whole City of mighty men, are not able to reſiſt a wiſe and pious Commander that beſieges them: but they are either taken by his cunning ſtratagems; or they yield themſelves to his eminent goodneſs; unto which they truſt more than to their fortifications.

Ver. 23. *Whoſo keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his ſoul from troubles.*] He that is wary and cautious in his talk, thinking ſeriouſly before he open his mouth, and taking care to offend neither GOD nor man by what he ſpeaks, preſerves his mind from a great deal of trouble, and himſelf from dangerous diſtreſſes.

Ver. 24. *Proud* and *haughty ſcorner* is *his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.*] He that is puffed up with a great conceit of himſelf, whoſe ambition makes him inſatiable in his deſires, as he regards neither GOD nor man; ſo he cannot endure the leaſt oppoſition, nor do any thing with moderation: but, being eaſily enraged with inſolent fierceneſs and cruelty, proceeds againſt thoſe that croſs his deſigns. *See* Arg. [g].

Ver. 25. *The deſire of the ſlothful killeth him: for his hands refuſe to labour.*] A ſluggard hath deſires as well as other men: which muſt needs be a perpetual torment to him, becauſe he will not be at the pains to give them ſatisfaction: nay, they bring him ſometime to a miſerable end; becauſe his ſloth moves him to make proviſion for them by robbery, or other unlawful ways, rather than by following ſome honeſt, but laborious calling.

Ver. 26. *He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and ſpareth not.*] Nor is there any meaſure in his deſires; but as they are endleſs, ſo they are exceeding eager and reſtleſs, to his own and others great diſturbance: but he that is diligent and honeſt, is ſo far from deſiring, much leſs ſtealing his neighbour's goods, that he freely gives away his own, and hath not the leſs thereby, but ſtill enough to ſpare.

Ver. 27. *The ſacrifice of the wicked* is *abomination: how much more*, when *he bringeth it with a wicked mind?*] GOD is ſo far from being pleaſed merely with Sacrifices (XV. 8.) that when they are offered by impious men, who never think of amending their lives, he deteſts them; though preſented with never ſo ſpecious a ſhew of piety: eſpecially, when at that very time they have ſome wicked deſign in their heads, which they think to ſanctifie by their Sacrifices.

Ver. 28. *A falſe witneſs ſhall periſh: but the man that heareth, ſpeaketh conſtantly.*] He that for money, or love, or hatred, ſhall teſtifie any thing of which he hath no knowledge, ſhall ſoon loſe his credit; and at laſt come to a miſerable end (XIX. 9.) but he, that in obedience to GOD, teſtifies nothing but what he hath attentively heard or ſeen; as he never varies from what he depoſes, ſo he ſhall alway be believed, and continue in good eſteem, as long as he lives.

Ver. 29. *A wicked man hardeneth his face: but* as for *the upright, he directeth his way.*] All the endeavours of a man reſolvedly wicked, is to grow ſo impudent that he may not bluſh at what he doth; nor be moved, in the leaſt, by any man's admonitions or reproofs: but a man ſincerely vertuous is ſo different from him, that he himſelf examines and cenſures his own actions if they be amiſs; and makes it all his care ſo to live, that he may not be aſhamed of what he doth.

Ver. 30. There is *no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the* LORD.] It is folly to deſign any thing which is not approv'd by the LORD: for let it be managed with all the skill that natural ſagacity, long ſtudy and experience can furniſh men withal; with the moſt prudent foreſight alſo of all contingencies; and with mature and deliberate advice about the moſt effectual means, and with due application of them to the end; they all ſignifie nothing, when they oppoſe the counſels and decrees of Heaven.

Ver. 31. *The horſe* is *prepared againſt the day of battle: but ſafety* is *of the* LORD.] Nor is power and force, though never ſo great, more ſignificant than counſel and advice: For after an army of Horſes, and Chariots, and valiant Soldiers, are ſet in battle array, they can give no ſecurity of Victory, without the divine favour and help; from whom alone therefore both ſafety and proſperous ſucceſs is to be expected. *See* Arg. [*h*].

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *After an admonition not to ſet too great a price upon Riches,* (v. 1.) *there follows another* (v. 2.) *unto rich men; not to ſet too great a value upon themſelves: but with an inſtruction alſo to the poor, not to be diſcontented with their condition; the rich having as much need of them, as they have of the rich.* Greg. Nazianzen, *indeed (Orat. XVI. p. 263.) is of opinion that* Solomon *doth not ſay, that* GOD *hath made one man poor and another rich,* οὐ γὰρ δῆλον εἰ θεόθεν ἡ τοιαύτη διαίρεσις, for it is not apparent that ſuch a diſtinction is from GOD: *but his meaning is only this, that* πλάσμα θεοῦ ἀμφότεροι, καὶ εἰ τὰ ἔξωθεν ἄνισα, they are both alike the Workmanſhip of GOD, though in external regards they be unequal. *Which ought to ſhame rich men into ſympathy, and brotherly-kindneſs towards them; that when they are apt to be lifted up becauſe of thoſe things wherein they are unequal, they may be taken down again and become more moderate, when they conſider how in the greateſt things they are both alike.*

But I have had a reſpect to the other thing alſo in my Paraphraſe: becauſe, if GOD *did not intend, in the beginning, ſo great a diſparity as we now ſee (which this is not a place to diſpute) yet ſome diſparity it may be eaſily proved, he did deſign; the mean condition, that is (though not beggary) of ſome, in compariſon with others. Which ſerves many wiſe ends of his Providence: nay, beggary may be very uſeful, to give the greater occaſion of liberality on the one hand, and of patience, humility, and honeſt diligence on the other. And to be commended for theſe vertues, is much better than to be rich, as he obſerves in the firſt verſe. Where* Melanchton *hath a large diſcourſe to ſhew that it is lawful, nay neceſſary, to endeavour after*

after a good fame: according to that saying, I have need of a good conscience, with respect to God, and of a good name for the sake of my neighbours. *And he alledges some ancient sentences to the same purpose with this of* Solomon; *as that of* Publius, Honestus rumor alterum patrimonium est: *and that of* Plautus, Honestam famam si servâsso, sat ero dives.

[b] *There are more observations about riches, in* v. 7, 8, 9. *which seem to me to have a dependance one upon the other; and so I have considered them in the Paraphrase. And in the next verse but one* (v. 11.) *I have followed the judgment of* Lud. de Dieu, *who thinks* Solomon *observes two fruits of pureness of heart; one, that the word of such a man may be relied on; and the other, that the King (who loves not to be deceived) will be his Friend upon that account. This seems nearest to the Hebrew; unless we will take it thus: Two things recommend a man to the affection of a Prince, his* Integrity, *and his* Eloquence: *which make him very capable to do his Prince service. And then the Paraphrase must run thus:* He that loves sincerity above all things, and is able to deliver his mind in acceptable language, is fit to be Privy-Counsellor to a King.

[c] *And to this, I conceive, he hath some respect in the next verse; where by* Dáath, Knowledge, *in the first part of it, we are to understand (the other part of the verse shews)* men truly knowing, and who speak according to their knowledge.

[d] *In the 13th verse, there is an admirable description of the disposition of slothful persons, who raise difficulties in their own fancies, where there are none; or, pretending them greater than they are, will not so much as attempt any thing, because it is possible they may meet with insuperable hindrances. Which some have, not unfitly, applied to cowardly Magistrates, who dare not punish great and powerful offenders; but excuse themselves, saying,* He is a mighty man, there is no dealing with him, *&c. Whereas a worthy Magistrate (as an excellent Prelate of our own, Bishop* Sanderson, *speaks) would meet with such a* Lion *to chuse; that he might make* God's Ordinance *to be reverenced, and clear the way for others, by tearing* such a beast *in pieces*; and would no more fear to make a Worshipful Thief, or a Right Worshipful Murtherer (if such a one should come in his circuit) an example of Justice; than to twitch up a poor sheep-stealer.

But the Lord Bacon *applies it, no less wittily, to the laziness of mankind, in the* Advancement of Learning *(L. 1. C. ult.) the knowledge of some things being so abstruse, that it is impossible to be compassed by humane industry. Whereas* all those things are to be held possible and performable, which may be accomplished by some persons, though not by every one; and which may be done by the united labours of many, though not by any one part; and which may be effected in a succession of Ages, though not in the same age; and in brief, which may be finished by the publick care and charge, though not by the abilities and industry of particular persons. *But there is no excuse for those, who will not set themselves to any enquiries; because some things cannot be known. Which is perfectly the temper of the sluggard* Solomon *here mentions; who because a* Lion *sometimes comes into the street, would not stir out of his doors. It was not ordinary, you must know, for* Lions *to come into Towns: no nor to rove in the day time (the night being their season, CIV.* Psal. 20.) *But sometimes by the divine vengeance they were stirred up to leave the deserts, and go into inhabited places (V.* Jer. 6. 2 King. *XVII.* 25. 26.) *and likewise (if we may believe the great Philosopher in his* History of Animals) *when they grow old,* περὶ τὰς πόλεις ἔρχονται μάλιστα, &c. *they haunt Cities more than other places; because then they are not so able to prey upon beasts, and therefore lie in wait for men. The same is affirmed by* Pliny, *as* Bochartus *observes, L. III. C. 2. Part 1.*

[e] *In the sixteenth verse I have followed our Translation, and expressed the sense to as much advantage as I could. But I think the* Vulgar Latin *which* Luther *and some others follow, comes nearer to the Hebrew, which runs thus:* He that squeezes the poor to increase his own estate, gives to the rich *(not to secure what he hath gotten, but)* only to impoverish it: *That is, He shall be squeezed by some mightier person than himself: And so the Paraphrase, in more words, should be this:*

Such is the just Providence of Almighty God, that he, who, to enlarge his own estate or power, oppresseth the poor by violence or deceit, shall meet with the like extortion from others more powerful than himself; and thereby be reduced to as poor a condition as those whom he oppressed.

1. A Good *name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.*] Riches are not so great a good as men imagine; for a wise man will prefer the fame of using them well (or any other vertue) much before them: and chuse much rather to be esteemed and beloved of good men, than to be possessed of abundance of silver and gold. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *The rich and poor meet together: the* Lord *is the maker of them all.*] The World doth not consist all of rich, nor all of poor; but they are mixed together, and have need one of another: and will agree well enough, and not clash one against another, if they both consider, that there is one Lord who is the Creator of both; and hath by his Providence ordered this inequality, for their mutual good. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 3. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*] He whose long experience and observation of things hath made him cautious and circumspect, foresees a calamity before it come; and withdraws himself from the danger, into a place of safety; but an incautious and credulous person is easily abused by crafty men, to overlook the mischief, which even they intend against him; and so he goes on securely in his accustomed track, till it overtake him.

Ver. 4.

Ver. 4. *By humility, and the fear of the* LORD, *are riches, and honour, and life.*] A modeſt ſenſe of a man's ſelf, and humble ſubmiſſion to the meaneſt condition, ariſing from a Religious regard to the divine Majeſty, is the way to be promoted, both to wealth and to honour; and to enjoy them both alſo a long time in joy and pleaſure.

Ver. 5. *Thorns* and *ſnares* are *in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his ſoul, ſhall be far from them.*] The life of a man that winds and turns any way, to bring about his ends, is very ſcandalous to others; and will intangle him at laſt in moſt grievous troubles: he therefore that hath a care of his ſoul, will have no ſociety with ſuch perſons; and thereby avoid the danger of being undone by them.

Ver. 6. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*] Inſtruct a child, as ſoon as ever he is capable, and ſeaſon his mind with the principles of vertue, before he receive other impreſſions: and it is moſt likely they will grow up with him; ſo that when he is older, he will not forſake them; but retain them as long as he lives.

Ver. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower* is *ſervant to the lender.*] Riches draw dominion along with them over the meaner ſort; nay, though a man be not abſolutely poor, yet if he be forced to borrow, he loſes his liberty, and depends upon the will and pleaſure of the lender.

Ver. 8. *He that ſoweth iniquity, ſhall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger ſhall fail.*] But let not ſuch abuſe their power, for no man can reap better than he ſows; but if he do injury to others, it ſhall produce his own trouble: and the Authority which he employs vexatiouſly and ſpitefully ſhall fail him; and not be able to bear him out in his inhumanity.

Ver. 9. *He that* hath *a bountiful eye, ſhall be bleſſed: for he giveth of his bread to the poor.*] On the other ſide, he that beholding the miſerable condition of others, takes compaſſion upon them, and friendly relieves them, ſhall be bleſſed by GOD, and commended by men: becauſe he doth not put them off to be ſupplied by others, but imparts of his own goods to him, that cannot requite him again.

Ver. 10. *Caſt out the ſcorner, and contention ſhall go out: yea, ſtrife and reproach ſhall ceaſe.*] Throw the ſcoffer, who derides all things, out of a ſociety, and contention, which he is wont to raiſe, will go out together with him: there will be no quarrels, no ſuits, no reproachful words, wherewith contending perſons are apt to beſpatter one another, when ſuch inſolent and turbulent men are excluded.

Ver. 11. *He that loveth pureneſs of heart, for the grace of his lips, the king* ſhall be *his friend.*] He whoſe heart is ſo free from guile, that he places his pleaſure in the integrity of his mind, and the purity of his conſcience, will never gloſs, nor flatter, nor ſtudy to put falſe colours upon things; but ſpeak ingeniouſly, according to the ſincere ſenſe of his Soul; upon both which accounts a wiſe Prince will value him; and adviſe with him as a Friend. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 12. *The eyes of the* LORD *preſerve knowledge, and he overthroweth the words of the tranſgreſſor.*] There is a ſpecial Providence of GOD, which watches over honeſt men (who ſpeak as they think) and which proſpers the advice they give, and the affairs they manage: but he ſubverts ſuch as are treacherous and perfidious; and blaſts all their counſels and deſigns. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 13. *The ſlothful man ſaith,* There is *a lion without, I ſhall be ſlain in the ſtreets.*] A ſlothful man never wants pretences to excuſe himſelf from labours; for he can feign to himſelf imaginary difficulties, and make a dreadful repreſentation of them: affrighting himſelf with dangers where there are none; or which happen very rarely. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 14. *The mouth of a ſtrange woman* is *a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the* LORD *ſhall fall therein.*] When thou art inticed by the beauty and blandiſhments of thoſe lewd women, from whom thou oughteſt to eſtrange thy ſelf as far as they are eſtranged from GOD (*ſee* II. 16.) remember that they allure thee into ſuch a gulph of utter deſtruction, that to fall into their familiarity, is a mark of the higheſt diſpleaſure of Almighty GOD againſt thee, for ſome other crimes.

Ver. 15. *Fooliſhneſs is bound in the heart of a child:* but *the rod of correction ſhall drive it far from him.*] Falſe opinions and bad inclinations ſtick ſo cloſe ſometime to the mind and will of a child, and are ſo twiſted with them, that no admonitions, no reproofs, nor the wiſeſt diſcourſes, but only prudent and ſeaſonable chaſtiſement, and that not without ſome ſeverity, will remove ſuch obſtinate folly.

Ver. 16. *He that oppreſſeth the poor to increaſe his* riches, and *he that giveth to the rich, ſhall ſurely* come *to want.*] There are ſome men have ſuch a mixture of ill qualities; that at the ſame time they will take from the poor to inrich themſelves, tho' it be by violence or fraud; and give to the rich and powerful to wink at their oppreſſions: But all in vain, for ſuch practices ſhall certainly bring them to beggary. *See* Arg. [*e*].

The End of the firſt Part of the Book of PROVERBS.

THE

THE SECOND PART OF THE BOOK of *PROVERBS.*

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

Now from this verſe, there is ſcarce any Interpreter but hath obſerved, another form of ſpeech much different from the former, begins, and continues unto the XXV. Chapter: And therefore it may not unfitly be called, The Second Part of the Book of Proverbs.

From the beginning of the Tenth *Chapter to this place, the Inſtructions of Wiſdom are delivered in ſhort ſentences, and* Proverbs *properly ſo called; which have ſeldom any connexion one with another, or not eaſily diſcerned; ſhewing what is good or bad, true or falſe,* &c. *But now follow Exhortations, and Precepts, in the* Imperative Mood *of ſpeech, and thoſe comprehended in* two *or* three, *or more verſes, before he finiſh what he intends. In which alteration, ſome think the weakneſs of the Reader is conſulted: who being weary of the ſententious way of inſtruction, may be refreſhed and awakened unto new attention, by varying the form of writing. And thus the Son of* Syrach *after his* gnomæ *or ſentences, adds an earneſt exhortation to the ſtudy of Wiſdom and Virtue, like this of* Solomon, *in the following* Section, *which I call his* Second Part. *Which may have reſpect both to that which follows: As if he had ſaid, let not all that hath been ſaid be loſt, or ſuperficially regarded; but take a ſerious Review of the foregoing Counſels: and give ear alſo to what I have farther to deliver,* &c.

[f] *And to move the greater attention, he commends them,* (v. 20.) *under the name of* Schaliſchim, words fit for a Prince to ſpeak, and the beſt men in the world to hear: *Which we truly therefore render* excellent things. *There is another notion of the word, I know, which I have not altogether neglected; but it always ſignifying in the* Bible, *either* great Captains *and* Commanders, *and* Nobles, *or the* beſt Sort of Muſical Inſtruments *(as it doth in one place) I look upon this as the moſt proper Interpretation of it.*

[g] *And among thoſe* Principal Rules *of life he firſt commends this* v. 22. *not to be injurious to poor people: eſpecially by oppreſſing them in a form of Juſtice. Which all know was adminiſtred by the Elders* in the gate *of their City; as may be ſeen in many more places, beſides that, which I have noted in the Paraphraſe* XXI. Deut. 19. XXII. 9. XXV. 7. IV. Ruth 1, 2, &c. *Which being ſo common a notion, it is ſtrange that the Greek Interpreters ſhould here underſtand this verſe of* poor people begging at their doors: *whom the wiſe man admoniſhes them not to abuſe. This ſeems to be their ſence: But the word* Tedakke *ſignifies more than ἀτιμάσῃς,* diſhonour, *or* abuſe, *(which is the word whereby the* LXX. *expreſs it) for it denotes as much, as to* cruſh, *and that* into bits, *i. e. to undoe People utterly; which no body is inclined to do, unto poor wretches begging at their Doors; who are undone already.*

[h] *Then follows a moſt neceſſary advice about the choice of a Friend,* v. 24. 25. *upon which the Lord* Bacon *hath paſſed this judicious remark?* (Advance of Learning, *B. VIII. Ch. II. Par.* 26.) "*By how much the more devoutly the Laws of Friendſhip among good men are to be obſerved; by ſo much the more it ſtands us upon to uſe all caution, even at the very firſt, in the prudent Election of Friends.* And let the diſpoſition and humours of our Friends be what they will, ſo far as concerns ourſelves only, they are by all means to be born withal: but when they impoſe a neceſſity upon us, to behave ourſelves juſt as they would have us towards other men, it is a very hard

" and unreasonable condition of Friend-
" ship. *Wherefore it highly concerns us, as*
" Solomon *here admonishes for the preserv-*
" *ing of the peace and safety of our life, that*
" *we intermingle not our matters with men*
" *of a cholerick nature: and such as easily pro-*
" *voke, or undertake Quarrels, and Debates.*
" *For such kind of Friends will perpetually en-*
" *gage us in contentions and Factions: so that*
" *we shall be constrained either to break off*
" *Friendship, or to be wanting to our own*
" *personal safety.*

[i] *In the two next verses* (V. 26, 27.) *he seems to warn Men against such Friendships, as will engage them to be bound for the debts of others. There are several Admonitions before, against being surety for a* stranger, *Vl.* I. XI. 15. *and in one place* (XVII. 18.) *he seems to caution against rash engagements, though for a* neighbour *or friend: but especially, he here adds, when a Man is conscious to himself that he hath no estate, and doth but deceive him to whom he stands bound for another's debt: And so by pretending to be more able than he is, deprives himself of the benefit of that Law mentioned XXII.* Exod, 26, 27, *and repeated XXIV.* Deut. 6.

[k] *What is said in the 28th verse against the removing of the* Boundaries *whereby one man's possessions are distinguished from another's; and that by ancient consent; is applied, by all sorts of Writers, as a caution against innovations. And it is a great mistake to imagine, that only* Popish *Authors make that use of it: for the best of the* Protestants, *have thought fit to accomodate it to the same purpose. And among the rest* Melancthon *hath very judiciously explained it, in this manner.* " *This*
" *Precept is not obscure if it be cited allego-*
" *rically for* not changing the Laws, which
" Antiquity by grave Authority hath de-
" livered; unless there be an evident ne-
" cessity. *For this is often repeated among*
" *the precepts of political life, not* rashly to
" change the ancient Laws. *And he here*
" *quotes a long Passage out of* Demosthenes
" *against* Timocrates, *concerning the people*
" *of* Locri; *who ordained that* he who pro-
" posed a new Law to them, should do
" it with an halter about his neck, *&c.*
" *And if there were such severity now, saith*
" Melancthon, *we should not have so ma-*
" *ny new* Dogmatists *and* Lycurgus's, *about*
" *Wax-candles, and Bells, and such like*
" *things; of whose change, as there is no ne-*
" *cessity at all, so it would bring no utility.*
" *And wise men require us* to pardon and
" indulge some small inconveniencies to
" custom; *lest by motion, as it is in sick bo-*
" *dies, the common wealth should suffer a*
" *greater evil. It is necessary indeed here to*
" *add this caution when any Doctrine is im-*
" *pious, and the Law establishes impious opi-*
" *nions and Idols,* then we ought to pre-
" fer Rules before them, and to obey
" God rather than man. *But when such*
" *amendment is necessary, the boundaries and*
" *limits of our Fathers are* not taken a-
" way, but restored: *because we only re-*
" *turn to the Doctrine delivered by God to*
" *to our first Father, according to that of*
" Tertullian, Primum quodque verissi-
" mum est. All our care therefore here-
" in is to enquire diligently, what is the
" true Antiquity: *for that is a great con-*
" *firmation of our Faith, when we understand*
" *the true state of the Church in all Ages,*
" *to follow the testimony of those who retain*
" *the Foundation.*

[l] *In the last verse* Solomon *doth not merely commend Industry and Diligence, as some understand it (taking this to be the same with the Greek Proverb,* Τύχη ἐστὶ φῶτος *but something more; which the* Hebrew *word* Mahir *plainly imports, viz.* speed, swiftness, readiness, *and* cheerfulness, *in the dispatch of Business. To which is required a quickness of apprehension in discharging the fittest means, and a dexterity in the application of them: so that the business is not only done, but done speedily, and without much noise and bustle. On such a person, if he can be found,* Solomon *here makes this remark, that he is likely to come to great preferment.* " *For there are no qua-*
" *lities as is observed by the Lord* Bacon *B.*
" *VIII. Ch. II. Parab. XIX. which Princes more*
" *respect and require in the choice of a Minister,*
" *or Servant, than celerity and alacrity in the*
" *dispatch of Business: which is above all the*
" *rest, as he shews by this induction. Men*
" *of* profound Wisdom, *are many times su-*
" *spected by Kings as too prying; and able*
" *by the strength of their wit as with an En-*
" *gine to turn and wind about their Ma-*
" *sters, insensibly, whether they will or no.*
" *Then* popular persons *are hated, as those*
" *that stand in the light of Kings, and draw*
" *the Eyes of the People too much unto them-*
" *selves.* Men of courage, *are commonly*
" *taken for turbulent spirits, and more daring*
" *than is meet.* Honest men, *who are va-*
" *luable for their integrity, are thought too*
" *stiff; not so pliable as their Masters desire,*
" *to their will and pleasure in every thing.*
" *To conclude, saith he, there is not any o-*
" *ther good quality, which presents not some*
" *shadow, wherewith the mind of Kings may*
" *be offended:* only quickness of dispatch,
" in the execution of commands, hath
" nothing in it, that doth not please.
" *The motions also of the minds of Kings are*
" *swift, and not very patient of Delays.* For
" they imagine they can do any thing:
" this only being wanting, that it be done
" out of hand. *Upon which account, above*
" *all other qualities,* celerity *is to them*
" *most acceptable.*

Ver. 17. *BOW down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.*] And now let me exhort thee again [IV. 20 V. 1.] whosoever thou art, that readest these things, to attend diligently; and consider seriously all the counsels and precepts which wise and good men have delivered: and in particular, let me prevail for an affectionate application of thy mind, to the knowledge which I impart unto thee.

Ver. 18. *For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withall be fitted in thy lips*

lips.] For it will give thee moſt high ſatisfaction if thou doſt ſo heartily entertain them, and thoroughly digeſt them, and faithfully preſerve them in mind: that thou art able withal to produce any of them, as there is occaſion, and aptly communicate them for other mens Inſtruction.

Ver. 19. *That thy truſt may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.*] For what greater ſatisfaction can there be, than to have a good hope in GOD, and to be well aſſured of his gracious Providence over thee; which is the very end, for which I now declare theſe things to thee: That if thou haſt been negligent before, yet now at length, thou, even thou mayſt know the way to happineſs; and ſhew it unto others.

Ver. 20. *Have not I written to thee excellent things in counſels and knowledge:*] Think of it ſeriouſly, and deny if thou canſt, that I have taken more ways than one for thy information, and have ſet down moſt excellent Rules, and thoſe well conſidered with great exactneſs and care, for thy conduct both in publick, and in a private ſtate of life. *See* Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 21. *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth, that thou mightſt anſwer the words of truth to them that ſend unto thee?*] That thou mightſt, not only have a certain, firm, and ſolid knowledge, of all thoſe truths that are neceſſary for thee, but be able alſo to give ſound advice to thoſe that ſend to conſult thee: and be fit to manage the moſt difficult affairs, to the ſatisfaction of them that employ thee in an Embaſſy.

Ver. 22. *Rob not the poor becauſe he is poor; neither oppreſs the afflicted in the gate.*] And beſides thoſe Inſtructions already given, remember theſe that follow. Never abuſe thy power to the ſpoiling of him, that is in a mean condition, becauſe he is unable to reſiſt thee: but eſpecially do not undo him there, where he hopes for relief, by denying him juſtice, much leſs by falſe accuſations, when he comes into the publick Courts of Judgment. (2 *Sam.* XV. 2.) *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 23. *For the Lord will plead their cauſe, and ſpoil the ſoul of thoſe that ſpoiled them.*] For all cauſes ſhall be heard over again, by a higher Judge; even the Lord himſelf, who will do them right: and force their ſpoilers to pay dearly for the wrong they have done them; for which nothing leſs than their life ſhall make ſatisfaction.

Ver. 24. *Make no friendſhip with an angry man: And with a furious man thou ſhalt not go.*] And as there is nothing more neceſſary than a Friend, ſo a principal point of Wiſdom conſiſts in the choice of him; concerning which, obſerve this rule among others: Not to enter into any familarity with a man prone to anger; and the more furious he is be ſo much the more cautious, of being, drawn along with him, into any company. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 25. *Leſt thou learn his ways, and get a ſnare to thy ſoul.*] For it will be a very hard matter to preſerve thyſelf, in good temper, when he is out of humour; but thy very kindneſs to him, will make thee feel the ſame commotion: Nay, bring thy very life into great danger, by being engaged in all his quarrels.

Ver. 26. *Be not thou* one *of them that ſtrike hands,* or *of them that are ſureties for debts.*] And do not keep company with thoſe, who are forward to paſs their word, and give ſecurity for the payment of other mens debts; leſt they draw thee into ſuch dangerous Engagements (VI. 1. XI. 15.) eſpecially when thou haſt no eſtate to anſwer the debt for which thou art bound. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 27. *If thou* haſt *nothing to pay, why ſhould he take away thy Bed from under thee?*] For it will highly incenſe the Creditor when he falls upon thee, to find thou art not ſo able a man, as thou madſt a ſhew of to him, and ſo provoke him to pull away the very bed from under thee, when thou art in it; and leave thee ſhamefully and wretchedly on the ground: For why ſhould any man have ſo little care of his own good, as thus to expoſe himſelf to ſuch miſerable ſtraits for the ſake of another.

Ver. 28. *Remove not the ancient land-mark, which thy fathers have ſet.*] Be content with thy own eſtate, and do not ſeek to enlarge it by invading other mens poſſeſſions: Eſpecially thoſe to which they have an unqueſtionable right, having enjoy'd them by long preſcription, and by the conſent of thy foreſathers, whoſe conſtitutions ought to be had in great veneration. *See* Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 29. *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs? he ſhall ſtand before Kings, he ſhall not ſtand before mean men.*] Mark a man that is not raſh, but yet quick and dexterous in the diſpatch of any buſineſs he is charged withal: and thou mayſt foretel that he ſhall not long continue obſcure, in ſome private and mean family; but be taken notice of, and preferred to the ſervice of his Prince, in ſome publick Miniſtry.

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *As the foregoing Chapter concludes with an obſervation, concerning the quality of a perſon, who is moſt likely to come to preferment; ſo this begins with a caution to him, when he is promoted to it. For the firſt Verſe is* (as Melanchthon *calls it*) Aulica Admonitio, *an Admonition to a Courtier; remembring him, that there is danger, even in the favour, eſpecially in the familiarity of Princes and great Men. Whoſe kindneſs muſt be uſed, with much modeſty and circumſpection: Eſpecially if they be ſo extraordinary kind, as*

to

to admit an inferiour to eat with them: when if a man uſe not great moderation, he loſes the guard he ought to have upon himſelf. For his head growing hot, his tongue may run, as we ſay, before his wit; his behaviour may be indecent, or too negligent, &c. *and therefore* Solomon *adviſes ſuch a perſon to be very conſiderate at that time, above all others; and with earneſt attention to mind both* who *and* what *is before him*: (*For the Hebrew words may refer to both, as I have explained it in the Paraphraſe*) *there being great danger of his ruin, if he give any offence, at ſuch a time; when the paſſions of the Prince or Ruler, are apt to be as diſordered, as his own. And therefore had need be watched, that he may know how to appeaſe them preſently; and ſo govern himſelf, as to receive no prejudice thereby.*

[b] *But eſpecially he muſt be ſure to have a command over his tongue* (*which* Melanchon *takes to be the meaning of* putting a Knife to his Throat, *v.* 2.) *that it take not too much liberty, and that he ſpeak nothing raſhly; which may undo him, as it did* Clitus: *whom* Alexander *ſlew at a Feaſt, for contradicting him too freely. He cites many Admonitions out of the Poets concerning this danger; concluding with that counſel which* Æſop *gave* Solon, *when he was going to* Crœſus; *ſpeak to a King,* ἢ ὡς ἥδιστα, ἢ ὡς ἥδιστα, either as little, or as ſweet, as is poſſible.

But this is too narrow a ſenſe of that phraſe, put a knife to thy throat; *though it be a part of it. For it expreſſes the exceeding great caution, a man ſhould uſe at a Feaſt leſt he exceed his bounds in eating and drinking: Wherein he ſhould be as careful, as he is of cutting his Throat; which many have in effect done by intemperance; whereby ſome have utterly deſtroyed their healths at laſt; and others fallen into ſuch a liberty of ſpeech, as hath on a ſudden coſt them their lives. Be afraid therefore, ſaith the wiſe man, of running into exceſs* (*of which thou art in great danger at a great table, if thou haſt a great ſtomach*) *as if thy knife wherewith thou cutteſt thy meat, would certainly cut thy throat, if thou eateſt too much. In ſhort, he adviſes a man to affright himſelf from Intemperance, where is a great temptation to it.*

There are thoſe indeed that take the firſt particle ve, *in the beginning of the verſe to ſignify as much as* otherwiſe; *and the meaning to be,* if thou doſt not curb thy appetite, but let looſe its reins to eat and drink, as much as it deſireth, it will expoſe thee to as certain danger, as if a knife were at thy throat: *Which though it be not ſo eaſy a conſtruction, I have not altogether neglected.*

[c] *After this follows an admonition againſt* Covetouſneſs, *v.* 4. *where he neither forbids all labour, nor a provident care* (*which in other places he commends*) *but only repreſents how vain it is, to be over ſolicitous; and to leave no thoughts, nor ſtrength for any thing elſe; for ſo the firſt word is,* do not weary thyſelf *to be rich. And in the next part of the Sentence, he only bids us* deſiſt from *our own underſtanding; meaning thereby, either we ſhould not wholly truſt to that, though in the uſe of honeſt means; or that we ſhould not follow our own inventions, contrary to the divine direction. Some would have the meaning of the whole to be this; do not prefer the getting of riches, before the getting of Wiſdom: Taking the verſe as if it ran thus,* labour not for riches ſo as to ceaſe from the proſecution of wiſdom: *Let not thy worldly cares hinder better things, and then there is no danger: which is an excellent ſenſe, if the words would bear it.*

[d] *The reaſon which* Solomon *adds,* v. 5. *hath little or no difficulty in it; which is from the uncertainty, either of getting or of keeping Riches. Whoſe inconſtancy he ſets forth by the flight of an* Eagle: *which of all other Birds is obſerved to fly* ſwifteſt, *and* higheſt *into heaven* (*as* Solomon *here ſpeaks*) *or into the clouds* (*as other Authors*) *that is, quite out of ſight. Whence it is that God ſaying, he carried the Iſraelites out of* Egypt upon Eagles wings, *XIX.* Exod. 4. *R.* Solomon (*upon XII* Exod. 37.) *took a conceit that they went an* hundred and twenty *miles in one hour; for ſo far it was from* Ramaſes *to* Succoth. *Which though it be but an idle fancy, yet there was this foundation for it; that the Scripture expreſſes the ſwifteſt motion by that of the* Eagles. *So* Saul *and* Jonathan, *who were ſtrong and excellent Racers, purſuing the Enemies with great ſpeed, are ſaid to have been* ſwifter than Eagles, 2 Sam. *I.* 23. *And ſuch were they who purſued* Zedekiah *and the People of* Judah, *when they fled out of* Jeruſalem *in hope to make an eſcape, IV.* Lam. 19. *I.* Hab. 8. *compared with* 2 Kings *XXV.* 4, 5. *And thus other Nations repreſent it, as* Bochartus *obſerves out of* Cicero, *who tells us out of* Chryſippus; *that when a Racer dream'd he was turned into an* Eagle, *an Interpreter told him;* Viciſti, iſta enim ave volat nulla velocius.

[e] *Next to Covetouſneſs he condemns* Envy, *as* Melanchon *and others underſtand,* v. 6. &c. *or rather ſuch covetouſneſs, as makes men ſordid: whence ariſes indeed that part of* envy, *which diſpoſes a man to grutch every thing to his neighbour, though he would be thought liberal: which I paſs by only with this note, of that good man; that a ſingular diligence ought to uſed, in obſerving and finding out, the diſpoſitions and inclinations of others; that we may know whom to avoid, and whom to conſort withal. And* (*according as he underſtands the beginning of the next verſe,* v. 7.) *there is none worſe than the man now mentioned, who hath a* Spectre *or* Satyr *in his Soul; ſo he renders it, miſtaking* Schaar *for* Saar: *which are widely different. And this word* Schaar, *being uſed only here in this place, hath raiſed a great deal of difficulty, whence to derive it: which I ſhall not trouble the Reader withal; the ſenſe being well enough expreſſed in our Tranſlation, and in ſhort is this,* He is not as he ſeems: *His*

thoughts

thoughts differ much from his words; and therefore do not believe what he saith, but mark the discovery he makes of his inward thoughts. Which are so sordid that he is detestable, *as some render the Phrase, or* stinkingly base.

[f] *Of* envy *at the prosperous estate of wicked men, which makes others wish themselves in their condition, though it be by imitating their wickedness, he speaks afterwards,* v. 17. *From whence to the XXV. Chapter, most of the precepts are admonitions, proper for Parents to give their Children; that they may know what to eschew: Particularly* Drunkenness *and* Whoredom (*of which he speaks in this Chapter*) *and such* company, *as may entice them to be so ludely wicked. And in order hereunto to implant in their minds a* due esteem of Wisdom, *as infinitely to be preferred before all earthly treasures. This he inserts in the middle, between the cautions against* Drunkenness *and* Whoredom [g] v. 23. *upon which the Lord* Bacon *hath passed this remark, that the Wise man judged it reasonable, that* Riches should be employed to get Learning and not Learning be applied to gather up Riches.

[h] *S.* Chrysostom's *Observation concerning an Harlot* (*Hom. XIV. ad pop.* Antioch.) *most excellently explains* v. 27, 28. *that* οὐκ ἐστὶ φιλῶν ἐν ἐπιστήμῃ ἀλλὰ ἐπιβουλῇ μόνον a Whore understands nothing of love or friendship but only of the art of inveigling. *Her heart is never sensible of true affection; but is made up of wiles to deceive and entrap men unto their undoing. And if the danger do not appear she is the more to be avoided* ὅτι κρύπτει τὸ ὀλέθριον, *&c.* because she covers the destruction, *and hides the death; and takes care it shall not presently come into the sight of him, whom she insnares into it.*

[i] *In the conclusion of the Chapter he resumes his discourse about* Drunkenness; *and represents at large the dismal effects of it, in so lively a manner, as may well deter any man that reads it seriously, from being too busy with Wine. Which he saith in conclusion,* bites like a Serpent, and stings like a Basilisk: (*So* Bochartus *hath proved we ought to translate the word* Tziphoni, *which we render* Adder) *whence it was, that* Tatianus, *the* Encratites *and* Manichees, *called Wine,* the gall of the Dragon, and the venom of the old Serpent: *and would not taste a drop of it, no not in the holy Communion. Not considering, what lies open and obvious to every bodies eyes, that there is no hurt in the thing itself (which is a singular divine benefit) but in our excess. Whereby innumerable diseases are bred in the body, the reason for the present suffocated, and the most absurd affections stirred up: which change men for the time into Beasts. Some into* Lions *as* Bochartus *glosses* (*L. III. C. X. P. 2.*) *witness* Alexander, *who killed his dearest Friend in his cups, and* Herod, *who after a Feast condemned the great Servant of God* John Baptist (*whom he himself highly reverenced*) *to be beheaded: others into* Dogs, *as* Nabal, *who most rudely and churlishly barked at* David, *to whom he had great obligations, when he was in drink: others into* Hogs, *wallowing in filthy pleasures; as* Lot *who defiled himself with incest, when he was not himself: nay, it throws men down below the beasts, who drink no more than water, and never excite their thirst by Art, but only follow the directions of Nature. All which if any man consider, he will easily allow of what* Solomon *says, that it* bites like a Serpent, *&c. that is, doth more mischief than can be repaired. For the wound which the* Basilisk *gives, is said by* Avicenna *to be incurable; and the Writers of his Nation say, it doth hurt even by its looks and by its* hissing, *as that Author before named relates Cap. IX. And so* Solomon *immediately represents the effects of drunkenness to be such, that they make a man senseless, and perfectly stupid; and consequently incorrigible, though he suffer never so sadly by it,* v. 34, 35. As if this poison, made a mortification in the whole man; for which there is no remedy.

Ver. 1. *WHEN thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee.*] When a Prince or a very great person, doth thee the honour to admit thee to his table; be not transported with such vain joy, as to remit the seriousness of thy mind: But remember thou art in danger, if thou hast not thy wits about thee to direct thy behaviour; lest thou touch any thing, which perhaps was reserved only for the Prince's own eating, or demean thyself undecently towards him or towards any of the Guests, or Waiters at the Table. *See* Arg. [a]

Ver. 2. *And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.*] Especially lest thou speak too freely, which may hazard thy undoing; for the prevention of which keep thy mind as sharp as thine appetite; and affright thyself from intemperance in language, as well as in eating: of which there is the greater danger, if thou hast a greedy desire of meat and drink. *See* Arg. [b]

Ver 3. *Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.*] Most especially when exquisite delicacies are set before thee; which are so tempting, that it is a piece of wisdom not to be too forward to accept of such invitations; or being there to content thyself with the plainest dish: for it was not kindness, but design perhaps which called thee thither; or thou mayst be easily inticed by such dainties, to over-eat thyself.

Ver. 4. *Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.*] Do not trouble thyself with restless and tiresome labours to get a great estate; be not too thoughtful, nor let thy cares be endless, about such matters; much less use any ill contrivances, which they may suggest to thee; no, nor depend so much upon thy own prudent management

for the ſucceſs of thy honeſt undertakings, as upon God's bleſſing. *See* Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which it not? For* riches *certainly make themſelves wings, they flee away like an Eagle towards heaven.*] Conſider, for the cure of this, how ridiculous it is, that thou ſhouldſt let thy mind be ſo intent upon Riches, and purſue them with ſuch haſte and earneſtneſs which perhaps thou canſt never catch; or if thou doſt may be gone as faſt as they came; and by all thy care and pains never be recovered. *See* Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 6. *Eat thou not the bread of* him that hath *an evil eye, neither deſire thou his dainty meats.*] Receive no obligations from a ſordid man: but tho' he invite thee to a Feaſt (which he may make perhaps ſometime for oſtentation ſake) let not the good cheer tempt thee, to accept his invitation. *See* Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 7. *For as he thinketh in his heart, ſo* is *he: Eat and drink, ſaith he to thee, but his heart* is *not with thee.*] For, even then, when he would be thought moſt free and generous, he is not able to diſemble the baſeneſs of his mind: Which expreſſes itſelf in his very looks; whereby he ſhews that when he prays thee to feed heartily, he had rather thou wouldſt let it alone, and thinks thou eateſt and drinkeſt a great deal too much.

Ver. 8. *The morſel* which *thou haſt eaten, ſhalt thou vomit up, and loſe thy ſweet words.*] Which will make thee ſo nauſeate, as to be ready to bring up again every bit thou haſt eaten: and to repent of the commendations thou haſt beſtowed on his entertainment; or the thanks thou haſt returned to him for it; or the wholſome diſcourſe, thou haſt interſperſed at the Table: for it is all perfectly loſt upon him.

Ver. 9. *Speak not in the ears of a fool; for he will deſpiſe the wiſdom of thy words.*] And indeed it is good advice, not to ſpeak of any ſerious thing to ſuch ſtupid fools: for be thy diſcourſe never ſo ingenious, prudent, or inſtructive, they will not only reap no profit by it; but deſpiſe and perhaps laugh at it.

Ver. 10. *Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherleſs.*] What was ſaid before (XXII. 28.) of not removing the ancient boundaries, underſtand with a peculiar reſpect to Fatherleſs Children: whoſe poſſeſſions be not tempted to invade, becauſe they are in their Infancy, and do not underſtand the wrong that is done them; or are utterly unable to defend or to right themſelves.

Ver. 11. *For their redeemer* is *mighty; he ſhall plead their cauſe with thee.*] For, if their guardians and friends be careleſs of their concerns, or afraid to oppoſe thy proceedings, they have a Protector who neither wants power nor courage to recover their Right: and will undoubtedly aſſert it, and condemn thee to make them ample ſatisfaction, XXII. 23.

Ver. 12. *Apply thine heart unto inſtruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.*] And do not think theſe to be ſlight admonitions, which need not much to be regarded but apply thy mind with ſincere affection to ſuch inſtructions, and liſten diligently to thoſe perſons whoſe diſcourſes tend to make thee underſtand thy duty.

Ver. 13. *Withhold not correction from the child: for* if *thou beateſt him with the rod, he ſhall not die.*] Unto which Children ſometimes will not attend, and therefore remember what hath been often ſaid (XIII. 24. XIX. 18. XXII. 15.) and do not forbear to give correction to a Child, that is ſo ill diſpoſed: let not fooliſh pity make thee ſpare him; for it will do him no hurt if he be ſoundly beaten; but rather be a means to ſave him from ſorer puniſhment, even from death itſelf.

Ver. 14. *Thou ſhalt beat him with the rod, and ſhalt deliver his ſoul from hell.*] Do not turn over this buſineſs to another, but do it thyſelf; which may ſave the publick Officers the labour: nay, by making his body ſmart for his faults, both body and ſoul may be delivered from utter deſtruction.

Ver. 15. *My ſon, if thine heart be wiſe, my heart ſhall rejoice, even mine.*] But mix the kindeſt exhortations and intreaties with this diſcipline, ſaying? My dear Child, if thou haſt any love for me, who was the Inſtrument of bringing thee into the world, be ſerious, and heartily in love with wiſdom and goodneſs: which will give me, me I ſay (not to mention now thy own happineſs) a joy incomparably greater than all other.

Ver. 16. *Yea, my reins ſhall rejoice, when thy lips ſpeak right things.*] A joy that may be better felt than expreſſed; diffuſing itſelf all over me; and making my mind triumph, when I hear no ill words come out of thy mouth; but only diſcourſes of the right way to be happy.

Ver. 17. *Let not thine heart envy ſinners: but* be thou *in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*] In which that thou mayſt always tread, be not offended at the proſperity of the wicked; much leſs vex and fret thyſelf into an imitation of them: but maintain perpetually an awful ſenſe of God in thy mind; which is the beſt preſervative againſt envy and all other ſins, if thou preſevereſt conſtantly in it. *See* Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 18. *For ſurely there is an end, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off.*] Which there is great reaſon thou ſhouldſt; for be aſſured, though thou art afflicted for the preſent, the time will come when thou ſhalt not only be delivered, but rewarded for thy patience: expect it confidently, if the fear of the Lord make thee perſiſt in faithful obedience to him: for it ſhall not be in the power of man to diſappoint thee of thy hope; but thou ſhalt certainly flouriſh when thoſe wicked men ſhall hang down their heads and periſh.

Ver.

Ver. 19. *Hear thou, my ſon, and be wiſe, and guide thine heart in the way.*] And more particularly, my dear Child, be adviſed by me to ſtudy this piece of wiſdom; and to follow cloſely and heartily this direction which I commend to thee.

Ver. 20. *Be not amongſt wine-bibbers; amongſt riotous eaters of fleſh.*] I know how greedy youth is of pleaſure; and in what danger to be corrupted by it: therefore avoid the ſociety of drunkards and gluttons; and take heed of all exceſs in eating and drinking.

Ver. 21. *For the drunkard and the glutton ſhall come to poverty: and drowſineſs ſhall cloth* a man *with rags.*] For beſides that it is an enemy to wiſdom, it brings men to poverty; which is the common effect of revelling, feaſting and riotous living: for that is wont to be attended alſo with lazineſs, careleſneſs and neglect of all buſineſs; which neceſſarily reduces men to extreme beggary.

Ver. 22. *Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and deſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe is old.*] Be obedient to this counſel, which is given thee by thy Father, who loves thee, and hath had longer experience of the world than thou, and by bringing thee into it hath power to command thee: and do not ſlight (as the manner is) what thy Mother ſaith, becauſe ſhe is a woman, much leſs becauſe ſhe is grown old; which ought to make her advice the more regarded by thee.

Ver. 23. *Buy the truth, and ſell it not*; alſo *wiſdom, and inſtruction, and underſtanding.*] Spare no coſt nor pains to acquire the knowledge of what is true and falſe, good and bad; and do not think there is any thing of equal price unto it: and therefore neglect not the ſtudy of it, though it were to get never ſo much money, or the higheſt honours; but perfect wiſdom and vertue, and the means that inſtruct thee how to attain it, and to make thee able to do good to others, infinitely before them all. *See* Arg. [g]

Ver. 24. *The father of the righteous ſhall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wiſe* child, *ſhall have joy of him.*] For there is no greater joy a Parent can have, than to ſee his Son take vertuous courſes: which as it is the only wiſdom, ſo gives both Parents and Children, the higheſt pleaſure and ſatisfaction.

Ver. 25. *Thy Father and thy mother ſhall be glad, and ſhe that bare thee ſhall rejoice.*] Let not thy Father and Mother then, want this ſingular pleaſure; but by thy well-doing fill the heart of her that bare thee with joy and triumph: who for all the pains and care ſhe hath had in thy birth and about thy education, deſires no other requital but only this.

Ver. 26. *My ſon, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes obſerve my ways.*] And more eſpecially, my dear Child, let me prevail with thee alſo to apply thy mind affectionately to this following inſtruction: and let thy thoughts be very intent and fixt upon it; that thou mayſt preſerve thyſelf in the practice of thoſe vertues to which I have directed thee.

Ver. 27. *For an whore is a deep ditch; and a ſtrange woman is a narrow pit.*] Eſtrange thyſelf from harlots, as much as they are eſtranged from GOD; for (as I have told thee before, XXII. 14.) thou art utterly undone, if thou falleſt in league with a whore; who will never be ſatisfied with all the money thou canſt give her; and yet, ſuch are her arts, notwithſtanding all the ſtreights and hardſhips thou ſhalt ſuffer by her, it will be hard matter, when thou art once engaged, to get quit of her.

Ver. 28. *She alſo lieth in wait as* for *a prey, and increaſeth the tranſgreſſors among men.*] She is not what ſhe appears; but, whatſoever love ſhe may pretend to thee, is no better than a high-way robber; who will watch all opportunities to make a prey of thee: and is of no other uſe in the world, which already is too bad, but to make it worſe; by increaſing the number of leud, diſloyal and faithleſs men. *See* Arg. [b]

Ver. 29. *Who hath wo? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babling? who hath wounds without cauſe? who hath redneſs of eyes?*] And if thou intendeſt to avoid ſuch women, then (as I ſaid before *v.* 20.) avoid intemperance; the lamentable effects of which are ſo many, that it is a hard matter to enumerate them: For if thou conſidereſt, who they are that run themſelves into all manner of miſchiefs, that are never out of danger, but are ingaged, for inſtance, in quarrels, diſturbing the neighbourhood, by their noiſe and tumult, and fighting; and are wounded, not for the ſafety of their Country, but for frivolous cauſes; look deformedly, and ſpoil their very countenances.

Ver. 30. *They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to ſeek mixt wine.*] Thou wilt find they are ſuch as are ſo in love with wine, that they neither willingly ſtir from it; nor content themſelves with the ordinary ſort: but make a diligent ſearch for the richeſt and moſt generous liquors.

Ver. 31. *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup,* when *it moveth itſelf aright.*] Therefore do not believe thy ſenſes merely, but conſider the power and effects of wine: and when thou ſeeſt how bright it looks, and how it ſparkles in the glaſs; when it taſtes moſt gratefully, and goes down ſmoothly; let it not entice thee to exceſs.

Ver. 32. *At the laſt it biteth like a ſerpent, and ſtingeth like an adder.*] But remember, that the pleaſure will be attended at laſt with intolerable pains; when it works like ſo much poiſon in thy veins; and caſts thee into diſeaſes as hard to cure, as the biting of a ſerpent or the ſtinging of a Baſiliſk. *See* Arg. [i]

Ver. 33. *Thine eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, and thine heart ſhall utter perverſe things.*]

Thy

Thy thoughts will not only grow confused, and all things appear to thee otherways than they are; but lustful, nay, adulterous desires will be stirred up, which thou canst not rule; and thy mouth, being without a bridle, will break forth into unseemly, nay filthy, scurrilous, or perhaps blasphemous language; without respect to God or man.

Ver. 34. *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.*] And, which is worst of all, thou wilt grow so perfectly senseless, that thy most important business will not only lie neglected; but thou wilt sottishly run thyself into the extreamest hazards, without any apprehension of danger: being no more able to direct thy course than a pilot who snorts when a Ship is tossed in the midst of the sea; or to take notice of the peril thou art in, than he that falls asleep on the top of the Mast, where he was set to keep the watch.

Ver. 35. *They have stricken me,* shalt thou say, and *I was not sick; they have beaten me,* and *I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.*] And to compleat thy misery, shouldst thou be not only, mockt and abused, but beaten also, thou thyself wilt confess, afterward, that it made no impression on thee: nay, shouldst thou be most lamentably battered and bruised, thou wilt neither know who did it, nor at all regard it; but, as if no harm had befall'n thee, no sooner open thy eyes, but stupidly seek an occasion to be drunk, and beaten again.

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *The proneness of good men, especially while they are weak, and only in the beginnings of Goodness, to be dejected at the prosperity of the ungodly, and so to be tempted to imitate them, is the reason, that the admonition we meet withal in the* first *verse is so often repeated. Which we find before III. 31. XXIII. 17. and comes again* v. 18. *of this Chapter.*

[b] *And, in like manner, for the encouragement of well-disposed persons, to depend on God's blessing, in the exercise of a vertuous prudence; for the getting, increasing, and preserving an estate* (v. 3, 4, 5.) *he repeats another observation* (v. 6, 7.) *of the advantage which Wisdom hath over mere strength: which we had several times before, XI. 14. XV. 22. XX. 18.*

[c] *And then having shown that it is not Wisdom to invent new ways of doing hurt* (v. 8. 9.) *he advises to diligence in the acquiring of true Wisdom, while we are in a good condition: For else we shall not be able to support ourselves when adversity comes. So some understand* v. 10. *which we translate otherways, and so do most Interpreters: and therefore I have expressed, the sense of our translation first; and only annexed the other to it. There is a third, which I have taken no notice of in my Paraphrase, because it doth not seem to me to be genuine; which is this,* If adversity deject thee, and break thy spirit; thou wilt be so much the more unable to get out of it. *But it is an excellent Observation, and therefore I thought good here to mention it: though the simplest sence seems to be that which we follow, and in brief is this;* Thou art not a Man of courage, if thou canst not bear adversity with an equal mind.

[d] *And there is a courage to be exercised in our charitable succouring of others, as well as in our own distresses; which he commends in the following words,* v. 11, 12. *Where he presses with a great deal of warmth (as will appear to those that understand the Hebrew Language, and read the last words with an Interrogation) the necessity of giving our assistance for the rescuing of innocent persons (when their Lives are in danger) either by counselling them, or petitioning others in their behalf, or purchasing their release with money, or using our authority, or power (if we have any and can do it lawfully) for their deliverance. For this chiefly belongs to Magistrates, and those that are in publick Offices; who ought not to be over-awed by great men, from undertaking the protection and relief of those who are unjustly oppressed. This I think* Melanchon *hath expressed, as well, or better then any I have met withal, in this manner:* "*God commands* "*both the Magistrates and private men, not* "*to murther the innocent, and likewise not* "*to assist unjust cruelty. But quite contrary,* "*the Magistrate ought to be the Guardi-* "*an of innocent mens lives; and private per-* "*sons in their places ought to oppose, with-* "*out sedition, unjust severity, as much as they* "*are able. There are many examples of this* "*in the Scripture.* Jonathan *opposed his* "*Father and helpt to preserve* David; *not on-* "*ly by the good testimony he gave of him,* "*but by other good offices.* Obadiah *fed the* "*Prophets, whom* Jezabel *designed to have* "*killed. The* Eunuch *pulled up* Jeremiah "*out of the dungeon; and the* Egyptian *Mid-* "*wives saved the* Israelites *children, as* "Rahab *afterward did the spies. In the* "*time of* Diocletian, *a noble person in the* "*city of* Nicomedia *in* Bithynia, *publickly* "*tore down the Edict of the Emperor, for* "*putting Christians to death; that he might* "*show he detested that unjust cruelty. Exam-* "*ples to the contrary, are such as that of* "Doeg, *who in compliance with* Saul's *fury* "*slew the innocent Priests: and many now* "*either openly or by their silence confirm the* "*unjust severity, which is exercised against* "*our Churches. Let such think of these words* "*of* Solomon, If thou forbear to deliver "them, *&c.*

[e] *Who shows with what pleasure such Instructions should be received, and how profitable, nay, necessary, they are, by the example of* Honey (v. 13, 14.) *which was not only reckoned the sweetest*

sweeteſt thing in thoſe Countries (as appears by many places of Scripture) but one of thoſe, which was moſt neceſſary, for humane life; as appears by the words of the Son of Sirach *XXXIX.* 41. *For it was uſeful for food, for drink, for medicine, for preſerving of dead bodies; and was ſo natural to them, that it ſeems to have been the food of Infants, VII.* Iſa. 15. *Whence the ancient Chriſtians, were wont to give a little* milk and Honey *to thoſe who were baptized; as perſons newly regenerate and born again: becauſe* Honey *as well as* Milk, *was the nutriment of little children in thoſe days and countries. How refreſhing it was, appears by the ſtory of* Jonathan, 1 Sam. *XIV.* 17. *and in what common uſe, by the example of our Saviour after his Reſurrection, XXIV.* Luk. 41, 42. *Which may all be applied to Wiſdom; from whence the mind derives the greateſt ſatisfaction: and therefore ought to be, as it were, our daily diet (without which we cannot ſubſiſt) from the beginning of our days, unto the end of them.*

[f] *For many gracious promiſes are made to it which muſt not be ſo underſtood, he ſhows, as if no evil thing ſhould befall good men: but as Wiſdom teaches them to be content with a little (which ſeems to be denoted by the word we tranſlate* habitation, *v.* 15.) *ſo when they meet with any affliction, it inſtructs them not to deſpair of better days. So thoſe words are to be underſtood* v. 16. *Which are commonly not only in* Sermons, *but in* Books *alſo applied to falling into ſin: And that men may the more ſecurely indulge themſelves in their ſins, and yet think themſelves good men, they have very cunningly added ſomething to them. For they are commonly cited thus,* A juſt man falleth ſeven times a day, *Which laſt words,* [a day, *or* in a day] *are not in any tranſlation of the* Bible *(much leſs in the Original) but only ſome corrupt Editions of the* Vulgar Latin: *which againſt the plain ſcope of the Context, and the meaning of the words, ſeems to underſtand this place of falling into ſin. When the word* fall *never ſignifies ſo; but always* trouble *and* calamity: *as abundance of learned men have long ago obſerved; particularly* Tarnovius; *and ſince him,* Amama *and* Grotius. *Nor needs there any other proof of it, than thoſe places (which are many) wherein* falling *and* riſing again *being oppoſed; both of them have reſpect to* calamities: *and the former ſignifies,* being plunged into them, *and the other* getting out of them. *And ſo, in the* Latin *tongue adverſities, are called* caſus, falls, *as every body knows.*

And therefore we muſt make uſe of other places, for the confuting the fanſy of perfection in this life; and for the comfort of thoſe who are caſt down by their lapſes into ſin: And take heed of reading the holy Scriptures ſo careleſly, as to turn our Medicine into poyſon: which is the fault of thoſe, who from ſuch miſtakes, give way to their evil affections; and let them carry them into ſin.

[g] *Againſt this there follows a ſevere caution, in the Wiſe man, who would not have us ſo much as indulge ourſelves in that pleaſure, we are apt to take, in ſeeing our Enemies fall into ſuch troubles, as they have given us* v. 17. *And to this he annexes another which cannot be too often repeated* (v. 19.) *againſt fretting at the proſperity of thoſe who do ill: which he often prohibits; but doth it now in the words of his Father* David, *XXXVII.* Pſal. 1. *whoſe authority was juſtly held very great in that Church: and who had made many obſervations, from his own experience, of the ſhortneſs of their felicity; and the ſudden changes with which they were often ſurpriſed and aſtoniſhed.*

[h] *An inſtance he gives of this in the next precept* (v. 21, 22.) *which, ſaith* Melanchthon *(ſo careful were the Reformers to prevent all* Sedition *and* Rebellion) *is to be reckoned among the principal ſentences, that are to be obſerved in this Book: commanding obedience, and directing the order of it.* "For firſt he "commands us to obey God; and then the "King: whoſe office it is to ſee the Laws of "God obſerved by his Subjects; and to make "ſuch Laws as are not repugnant to God's "Laws; and to puniſh the contumacious; and "to pronounce all ſentences according to the "Laws, &c. *And* in dubious caſes, their "decrees ought to prevail; *not only be-*"*cauſe there is a probable reaſon on their* "*ſide, but becauſe of the Authority given from* "*above unto Magiſtrates: whom God would* "*have us in civil affairs, though dubious be-*"*fore, to obey. And becauſe God gives us* "*ſometimes more mild and gentle, ſometimes* "*leſs kind, he would have us alſo to bear* "onera duriora, *if they be tolerable, and* "*obedience be not a ſin. For he threatens* "*here a ſevere vengeance to thoſe that are* "ſeditious: *ſo he tranſlates the word* Schonim; *which the* Chaldee *tranſlates* fools (changelings *in our language) for they are* "*no better, who invert and* change *this* "*order (as ſome underſtand the word)* ei-"ther by advancing the will of the "Prince above all Law, without any re-"gard to what GOD himſelf hath en-"acted; or by pretending Religion and "the fear of the LORD, for rebellion a-"gainſt the King, who ordains nothing "againſt GOD's Law.

[i] *But there is no neceſſity of gloſſing upon that word (which we render* given to change) *for though it be diverſly tranſlated, the ſence is ſtill the ſame. And ſome of the varieties that are of opinions, about the ſence of the latter part of the* 22 *verſe, I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe, and made them agree well enough.* Lud. de Dieu *is alone by himſelf, (as far as I can find) who would have that word we render* both of them, *to ſignify* their years: *and the meaning to be;* who knows how ſoon their life may be at a miſerable end?

Among the following ſentences, which are rules alſo of Wiſdom, there is no difficulty; but a little in v. 26, *and* 28. *Where I have endeavoured to comprehend ſeveral expoſitions; and connex them together in my Paraphraſe: but think not fit to enlarge this Preface any farther, by giving a particular account of them.*

Ver. 1. *BE thou not envious againſt evil men, neither deſire to be with them.*] Let it not vex thee into impatience and indignation, to ſee men thrive who are bent upon nothing but wickedneſs; much leſs move thee to think them happy, and to wiſh thyſelf among them: but avoid their company, and much more their courſe of life. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *For their heart ſtudieth deſtruction, and their lips talk of miſchief.*] For who would grow rich and great by the miſery of others; and ſuch mens thoughts are always contriving how to ruin thoſe who ſtand in the way of their wicked deſigns: and their tongues are employed in lies, calumnies, falſe accuſations, and all manner of forgeries; not only to give trouble and vexation unto their neighbours, but to undoe them.

Ver. 3. *Through wiſdom is an houſe builded, and by underſtanding it is eſtabliſhed:*] An eſtate may be gotten, and a family raiſed by ſuch wiſe and pious means, as I have recommended in this Book; and there need no other arts but vertue and prudent management, to ſettle and continue it.

Ver. 4. *And by knowledge ſhall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleaſant riches.*] For as true learning and knowledge is the beſt furniture of the mind; ſo it is beſt able to furniſh every room in the houſe; not only with all things neceſſary, but with what may ſerve for ornament and for the pleaſure of life.

Ver. 5. *A wiſe man* is *ſtrong, yea, a man of knowledge increaſeth ſtrength.*] Wiſdom alſo is able to ſupply the defect of bodily ſtrength, for a man's defence againſt unjuſt invaders of his Poſſeſſions: or if he have outward ſtrength and power, his skill and dexterity will add ſuch force unto it, as will make it more effectual.

Ver. 6. *For by wiſe counſel thou ſhalt make thy war: and in multitude of counſellers* there is *ſafety.*] For experience tells us, that victory doth not depend ſo much upon mighty armies; as upon exact conduct, good diſcipline, ſubtile contrivance: and the ſafety of a Nation doth not lie merely in the multitude of the people; but in the number of wiſe men, to direct and govern all affairs, (XI. 14.) *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 7. *Wiſdom* is *too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.*] Who are the more valuable, becauſe it is no eaſy thing to be an accompliſhed perſon in all the parts of wiſdom; which are above the reach of vain, raſh and heady men: who are not admitted either to judge, or to adviſe in the common Council of the City; where wiſe men are not afraid, nor aſhamed to ſpeak, and that with great authority.

Ver. 8. *He that deviſeth to do evil, ſhall be called a miſchievous perſon.*] He that deviſeth new ways and arts of cheating, or doing miſchief unto others, is one of the worſt of men; and ſhall be branded with the odious name of, *An inventer of evil things,* (I. *Rom.* 30.)

Ver. 9. *The thought of fooliſhneſs* is *ſin: and the ſcorner* is *an abomination to men.*] To contrive any thing that is hurtful unto others, though out of raſhneſs and folly, is a ſin: but he that makes a jeſt of it when it is done, and laughs at thoſe who tell him it is a ſin; is ſuch a peſtilent wretch, that he is, or ought to be, extreamly abhorred of all mankind.

Ver. 10. *If thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength* is *ſmall.*] To deſpond and deſiſt from any good deſign, much more to deſpair of deliverance, when thou falleſt into any diſtreſs, is an argument of great weakneſs and feebleneſs of mind: and yet, if thou art remiſs in the ſtudy of Wiſdom in a proſperous condition, thy ſpirit will be apt to ſink, and be dejected in a worſe, *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 11. *If thou forbear to deliver* them that are *drawn unto death, and* thoſe that *are ready to be ſlain:*] Uſe thy beſt endeavours to deliver innocent perſons who by falſe accuſations, or other ways, are dragged to execution; or are in preſent danger of loſing their life: and do not think, thou canſt with a ſafe conſcience withdraw thyſelf, from ſuccouring them in that diſtreſs.

Ver. 12. *If thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider* it? *and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth* not *he know* it? *and ſhall* not *he render to* every *man according to his works?*] I know the common excuſe which men are apt to make in this caſe; proteſting that they did not underſtand their innocence, or how to ſave them: but doſt thou think ſuch things will paſs with GOD, though they do with men? Canſt thou deceive him with falſe pretences? Him, that ſearcheth into the ſecrets of all mens hearts? Him, that obſerveth every, the very leaſt, motion of thy Soul? by whoſe wiſe Providence, which ſerves all men in their kind, thou thyſelf ſhalt be deſerted, as thou haſt deſerted others. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 13. *My ſon, eat thou honey, becauſe* it *is good; and the honey-comb,* which *is ſweet to thy taſte:*] Do not ſlight, much leſs naſeate ſuch precepts as theſe, my dear Child, but as honey is moſt acceptable to thy palate, both for its wholeſomneſs, and for its pleaſure; eſpecially that pure part of it, which drops of itſelf immediately from the honey-comb. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 14. *So* ſhall *the knowledge of wiſdom* be *unto thy ſoul: when thou haſt found* it, *then there ſhall be a reward, and thy expectation ſhall be cut off.*] So let that knowledge be to thy mind, which tends to make thee wiſe and virtuous: for as nothing is more neceſſary for thee, nothing more delightful; ſo, if it be ſeriouſly ſtudied and thoroughly digeſted, it will abundantly reward thy pains, with proſperous ſucceſs in all thy undertakings; and never put thee in hope of any

any thing, which ſhall not anſwer thy expectation.

Ver. 15. *Lay not wait, O wicked* man, *againſt the dwelling of the righteous: ſpoil not his reſting-place.*] Is it poſſible indeed that a good man's condition may be very mean, nay, afflicted ſome time in this world: but let not that tempt the wicked ſubtilly to contrive to ruin, much leſs to open violence to diſturb his innocent repoſe; nay, caſt him out of his ſmall habitation, with which he is contented:

Ver. 16. *For a juſt man falleth ſeven times and riſeth up* again: *but the wicked ſhall fall into miſchief.*] For tho' a good man ſhould meet with ſo many troubles, that thou imagineſt he cannot fail to periſh in them; he ſhall overcome them all, and flouriſh again; when the wicked ſhall ſink under the calamity that befalls them, and never be able to recover out of it. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 17. *Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth:*] It is a great piece of wiſdom and vertue alſo, to pity others in their trouble, and not to ſhew any ſign of joy and mirth, when thou ſeeſt any man, though he be thy enemy, in a calamitous condition: no, not ſo much as (upon thy own account) to take any inward pleaſure in his downfall.

Ver. 18. *Leſt the Lord ſee* it *and it diſpleaſe him, and turn away his wrath from him.*] For tho' no body ſees it, GOD doth and ſuch inhumane affections are ſo diſpleaſing to Him, that they may provoke him to tranſlate the calamity from thy enemy unto thee: and thereby damp thy ſinful joy with a double ſorrow; firſt to ſee him delivered from his trouble, and then to find thyſelf involved in it.

Ver. 19. *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of evil* men, *neither be thou envious at the wicked.*] Let not thy anger kindle (or if it do, quench it preſently, that it may not tempt thee to impatience) when thou ſeeſt men thrive and proſper: and do not imagine them to be happy men, and thereby be provoked to follow them, in their impious courſes. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 20. *For there ſhall be no reward to the evil* man, *the candle of the wicked ſhall be put out.*] For tho' a wicked man may live bravely for a time, yet it ſhall end quite otherwiſe than he expected: and his ſplendour (ſuch as it is) if not in his own days, yet in his poſterity, be utterly extinguiſhed.

Ver. 21. *My ſon, fear thou the Lord, and the king:* and *meddle not with them that are given to change.*] Take care therefore, my dear Child, that thy religion (which teaches thee in the firſt place to worſhip, reverence, and obey the great LORD and Governour of all the world) make the humbly obedient to the King, as GOD's Vicegerent here on earth: and having to do with thoſe, whoſe diſcontent with the preſent ſtate of things, or their love of novelty, makes them affect a change of Government; and depart from their duty both to GOD and man. *See* Arg. [*h*].

Ver. 22. *For their calamity ſhall riſe ſuddenly, and who knoweth the ruin of them both?*] For an unexpected and dreadful calamity ſhall unavoidably and violently ſeize on them: but when, and how either GOD or the King will puniſh them none can tell; or what terrible vengeance they will take, both upon thoſe that move rebellion, and thoſe that aſſociate with them. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 23. *Theſe* things *alſo* belong *to the wiſe.* It is *not good to have reſpect to perſons in judgment.*] Theſe things alſo that follow, belong to the wiſe and vertuous conduct of thy life. It is a very evil thing, if thou art a judge, to conſider the quality of the Perſon (either his greatneſs, or his relation, or the frienſhip thou haſt with him, *&c.*) and not the merits of the cauſe, that is brought before thee.

Ver. 24. *He that ſaith unto the wicked, Thou* art *righteous; him ſhall the people curſe, nations ſhall abhor him.*] And who ever he be, that contrary to the plain evidence which is given in againſt the wicked, ſhall pronounce him innocent, and make a bad cauſe to be good, the whole Country ſhall curſe him, and wiſh the divine vengeance ſhall overtake him: nay, other Nations, who hear of his unjuſt proceedings, ſhall have him in a greater deteſtation.

Ver. 25. *But to them that rebuke* him *ſhall be delight, and a good bleſſing ſhall come upon them.*] But they that give a check to vice and wickedneſs, by puniſhing evil doers according to their deſerts, ſhall not only have inward ſatisfaction in their own mind; but increaſe of joy, by hearing others ſpeak well of them: nay, GOD himſelf, the fountain of all good, ſhall plentifully beſtow his bleſſings upon them.

Ver. 26. Every man *ſhall kiſs* his *lips that giveth a right anſwer.*] It is not only juſtice but kindneſs, to paſs a righteous Sentence, without fear or favour; and upon all occaſions to ſpeak appoſitely and conſonant to truth: and as ſuch perſons give others a ſingular pleaſure, ſo they ſhall be beloved moſt dearly, and honoured by all.

Ver. 27. *Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyſelf in the field; and afterwards build thine houſe.*] Do every thing in order: and firſt mind thoſe things which are moſt neceſſary; contenting thyſelf with a little hutt in the field till thou haſt gotten an eſtate, by a careful improvement of thy paſturage and of thy tillage: and then it will be timely enough to build thee an houſe, and to bring a wife into it.

Ver. 28. *Be not a witneſs againſt thy neighbour without cauſe: and deceive* not *with thy lips.*] Do not teſtify any thing againſt thy neighbour raſhly, much leſs when thou haſt no ground at all for the accuſation; nor ſeduce any body into a falſe opinion of him, by crafty inſinuation; much leſs ſuborn them ſecretly by promiſes of rewards, to

ſay

ſay that which is not true of him; when outwardly thou carrieſt thyſelf to him, and pretendeſt to be his Friend.

Ver. 29. *Say not, I will do ſo to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.*] Suppoſe he hath been injurious in that kind to thee heretofore, and thou haſt now an opportunity to be revenged; let not that tempt thee to reſolve with thyſelf to do to him as he hath done to thee: taking upon thee that, which GOD hath declared belongs to himſelf alone (XXXII. *Deut.* 35.) to recompence unto him, according to his deſervings.

Ver. 30. *I went by the field of the ſlothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of underſtanding:*] And, to that which I have juſt now ſaid (*v.* 27.) concerning diligence I will add this obſervation; which I myſelf made, as I took a view of the ſtate of my Subjects, among whom I found one ſo lazy and void of conſideration; that though he had good land in the field, and a fruitful vineyard;

Ver. 31. *And lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the ſtone-wall thereof was broken down.*] Yet, ſuch was his wretched ſloth, inſtead of corn I was ſurpriſed with the ſight of thorns and thiſtles, which had over-run his whole field; nor was there any thing but nettles to be ſeen in his vineyard: or if there had been any fruit in either, it would have been loſt for want of a fence; which was fall'n down, and laid all open to the beaſts of prey.

Ver. 32. *Then I ſaw,* and *conſidered it well: I looked upon* it, and *received inſtruction.*] Which rueful ſpectacle ſo deeply affected my heart, and brought ſo many thoughts into my mind; that I learnt by beholding thoſe miſerable effects of idleneſs, to cure that vice in myſelf, and to correct it in others.

Ver. 33. Yet *a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep:*] And I cannot do it better, than in thoſe words before uſed (VI. 10, 11.) If thou wilt not rouze up thyſelf, O ſluggard, but rouling thyſelf on thy bed, ridiculouſly deſire thy pains may be ſpared, and that thou mayſt ſtill be ſuffered without any diſturbance to enjoy a little more ſleep, and to lay aſide all care of thy buſineſs, when thou haſt loytered too long already.

Ver. 34. *So ſhall thy poverty come,* as *one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.*] Then poverty ſhall come ſwiftly (though in ſilent and unobſerved paces) upon thee; and, before thou art aware, leave thee as naked, as if thou wert ſtript by a high-way-man: nay, the moſt extreme want, and beggary ſhall unavoidably ſeize on thee, like an armed man, againſt whom thou canſt make no reſiſtance.

The End of the Second Part of the Book of PROVERBS.



THE

THE THIRD PART OF THE BOOK of *PROVERBS.*

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *Here begins the* THIRD PART *of the Book of Proverbs; which are a Collection made by ſome belonging to* Hezekiah: *and acknowledged here (in the entrance of the Book) as well as the former, to be* Solomon's. *Who ſpake a great many* Proverbs *(we read one* Kings *IV.* 32.) *which no doubt were preſerved by his Succeſſors in a Book; if he did not ſet them down there himſelf. Out of which Volume, ſome good men had ſelected ſuch as they thought moſt uſeful for the people: and beſides thoſe in the foregoing Chapters, which had been compiled, either in his own days, or ſoon after; theſe alſo which follow, were thought good to be added in the days of* Hezekiah. *Who reſtoring the ſervice of God in the* Temple *to its purity and ſplendour* (2 Chr. *XXIX.* 3, &c. *XXXI.* 2, 3, &c.) *took care in all likelihood for the better inſtruction of the People in piety, to revive the* Schools of the Prophets *alſo: and to preſs* them *(as he had done the* Prieſts) *to do their duty faithfully; in teaching the Laws of God, and informing the people in all things that might be profitable for them.*

Out of which Schools ſome were choſen, it is probable, to attend the King himſelf; who are called his men *or* ſervants: *who out of their great zeal to promote uſeful learning, culled out more* Proverbs *from among that great heap of* three thouſand *(which would have been too great a bulk to have been all publiſhed, and perhaps all of them not concerning manners, or good Government) and ſuch eſpecially as they ſaw would do good to the* Prince *as well as to the people; of which nature are thoſe that are put into this Collection; many of which belong to the right adminiſtration of the publick affairs. I am not able to produce expreſs authority for all this; but I think it may be fairly conjectured from thoſe words,* 2 Chron. *XXXI.* ult. *where we read of the pains* Hezekiah *took, about the* Law, *and about the* Commandments; *as well as about the* ſervice of the houſe of God.

But who the perſons were, that he employed in tranſcribing theſe Proverbs *out of the ancient Records, is more obſcure. Some of the Hebrews ſay,* Shebna *the Scribe, and his* Officers *or* Clerks *that were under the principal* Secretary. *Others add* Eliakim *and* Joah *(who are joined together in* 2 Kings *XVIII.* 26, 37.) *Others fancy them to have been* Eſaiah *(a perſon of great quality, near of kin to the King, and very familiar with him) together with* Hoſea *and* Micah; *who all lived in the days of* Hezekiah, *and might poſſibly undertake this excellent Work. In which they aſſert ſome things, which are to be found, in the foregoing parts of this Book, in words but little different, as* v. 24. *of this Chapter, and* Ch. *XXVI.* 13, 15, 22. *and other places; of which I cannot ſtay here to give an account.*

[b] *They begin the Book with a Sentence, which the Lord* Bacon *applies to all the learning and wiſdom of* Solmon. "*In which, ſaith* "*he,* Solomon *challenges nothing to himſelf,* "*but only the honour of the inquiſition, and* "*invention of Truth:* which it is the glory "of God to conceal, and the glo"ry of a King to find out. *As if the* "*Divine Majeſty took delight to hide his works,* "*to the end to have them found out; and* "*as if Kings could not attain greater honour* "*(or pleaſure or recreation either) than to* "*employ themſelves in that buſineſs: conſidering the great command they have of* "*wits, and means, whereby the veſtigation* "*of all things may be effected. Thus he L.* VI. *of the* Advanc. of Learn. Ch. 6.

Which is a very ingenious gloss; if we refer both parts of the Sentence to one and the same matter: *tacitly admonishing* Hezekiah, *and in him all succeeding Kings, not to spend their time in any thing so much, as in searching after truth; and indeavouring to understand not only the secrets of Government, but of the Laws of God, and of all his Works: that they may not be imposed upon by false colours and deceitful glosses; which cunning wits are apt to put upon causes that are brought before them; nay, upon the Book of God itself.*

But if the words be well examined, they will be found to speak rather of different matters; *which God conceals, and into which Kings penetrate. By which some understand one thing, and some another: but taking the word* Elohim *to relate to God's Government of the World; that which I have said in the Paraphrase, seems to me the neerest to the business. And* Jansenius *his exppostion is not forced; who discourses to this purpose. It is part of God's glory that he need search into nothing; besides He perfectly knows all things: and yet need not declare that He takes notice of every thing (because he can do it when he pleases) but rather seem to dissemble his knowledge; in which he wonderfully declares his patience and long-suffering towards us. But Kings on Earth must not herein imitate Him; for it is their honour to search diligently and enquire into the state of their Kingdom; and to correct presently what they find amiss; lest it be out of their power, when it is strengthned by long custom and numerous offenders. But especially in difficult and intricate business, covered with darkness and obscurity, perplexed with many windings and turnings, and with crafty and subtile conveyances; there to spy light, and by wisdom and diligence to rip up a foul matter, and searching the cause to the bottom to make a discovery of all, is a thing most worthy of a King, and tends highly to his honour. In short,* as it makes for the glory of God, that he need not enquire into nothing, but, when he knows all things, yet conceals that knowledge: so, on the contrary side, it makes for, the glory of Kings, that when they are forced to confess, that they are ignorant as well as other men, of many things; they make such diligent enquiry, that they discover and detect those things, which others have intangled, and would have buried in darkness.

To some such purpose, all Interpreters expound these words, save one: who referrs both parts of the Sentence to Kings (understanding by Elohim, Gods, *Judges and Princes) in this sence;* wise Kings preserve the reverence which is due to their persons and place, by concealing carefully their own intentions and counsels; and by finding out the designs of other men. *Thus* Maldonate; *which I mention, because it is a great truth, though not the sence of the words, but rather the meaning of the following verse,* V. 2.

[c] *Which concerns Kings also, as some of those that come after likewise do (which would incline one to think this Part of the Book of Proverbs, was particularly collected for the use of* Hezekiah) *and hath received this gloss from the same great man I named before, the Lord* Bacon: *who gives this as one of the chief reasons, why the* hearts of Kings are inscrutable, *because,* "they being at the very top of humane desires, have not, for the "most part, any particular ends proposed to "themselves (none at least to which they ve"hemently and constantly aspire) by the site "and distance of which ends, we may be di"rected to take the measure and scale of the rest "of their actions: whereas there is no private "person, who is not altogether like a Traveller, that goes intently aiming at some cer"tain terms of his journey, where he may "stay and rest: from whence one may pro"bably conjecture, what he will do, or not "do. For if any thing conduce to the end "at which he aims, it is likely he will do "it; but if it cross his design, he will not. "Therefore he passes this judicious observa"tion upon the whole: that Princes are "best interpreted by their natures, and "private persons by their ends. *Adv. of Learn.* B. VIII. Ch. 2.

But from hence also he observes (in his first Book) that it is best not to be too inquisitive to penetrate into the hearts of Kings: since we are so ignorant of the things we see with our eyes every day: which the custom of the Levant *aims at, that makes it an heinous offence to gaze and fix their eyes upon Princes:* which is barbarous in the outward ceremony, but good in the moral: *For it becomes not Subjects to pry too far into their Princes counsels. But it may as well check the ambition, as the curiosity of private persons; because they can hardly be sure of that favour which they may imagine their prince hath for them: there being such depths in their inclinations and affections as they cannot sound.*

But in the next verses Princes are admonished that there is no policy like true Vertue, to support their Thrones: and that in order to it they should not keep so much as one ill man about them: who oft-times corrupts the whole Court, and disturbs the whole Kingdom.

[d] *And in the next verse he admonishes Subjects, not to be vainly ambitious; nor bold and forward to thrust themselves into offices, or into a rank that doth not belong to them: but to be modest, especially in the Prince's presence; and (according to our Saviour's rule) to be invited to honour, rather than greedily seek it. And withal he secretly commends to Kings, the care of keeping up their state and dignity: not suffering every body to intrude into their presence, but giving a check to proud, bold and sawcy persons.*

Then follow private instructions, not to be too forward to go to Law; and when we do, to manage Suits fairly, without aspersing those with whom we contend; and without breaking the Laws of Friendship: which require us, not to discover the secrets wherewith another hath intrusted us, V. 9, 10.

[e] *In the* eleventh *verse I have followed* Maimonides *his interpretation of the word* Maskijoth;

Maskijoth; *in his Preface to his* More Nevochim. *And it being doubtful, whether by* apples of gold, *he mean apples that look like gold, or apples made of gold; I have expreſſed both.*

[f] *But I muſt not give a particular account of every verſe; and therefore I ſhall only add, that I have taken the meaning of the* 16 *and* 17 *verſes to be, that* moderation is good in all things, eſpecially in thoſe that pleaſe us: *As* honey *doth; which was ſo plentiful in thoſe countries (as it is in many other) that it was ordinarily found in the* woods, *and* holes of rocks, *&c. as may be ſeen in* Bochart. *L. IV. C.* 12. *P.* 11. De Sac. Animal.

[g] *In the* 20*th* ver. *I have followed* Melanchon *in what he obſerves out of* Pliny *concerning* nitre (*whoſe nature is not now well known*) *that it is exaſperated by* vinegar *or* lime. *But in the latter end of the verſe, I have kept to our Tranſlation, which by* lebra *underſtands an heart ill affected by grief or ſorrow: which he takes literally for an evil or wicked heart. And makes this the meaning (which ſome others have followed) that* pertinacious ſinners, are made more furious by admonitions.

In all ancient tranſlations there follows after this verſe, this Sentence. As a moth in a garment or a worm in wood; ſo is heavineſs in the heart of man. *But St.* Hierom, *in the latter end of his Commentaries upon* Eſaiah, *tells us that it was* ſub obelo *in* Origen's *Works, where he noted all ſuperfluous additions, with that mark.*

[h] *I muſt not omit neither, that the* 23*d verſe, will admit of a quite contrary ſence, to that in our Tranſlation; and is by ſome rendered thus;* As the north wind begetteth rain (*for ſo it doth in ſome Climates*) ſo a backbiting tongue raiſeth up anger and indignation, (*which appear in the countenance, both of him that believes the calumny, and of him that is calumniated; when he knows how he is abuſed.*)

[i] *There is no great difficulty in* v. 26. *But Interpreters are divided about this, whether he ſpake of a juſt man's falling into* ſin; *or into ſome* calamity. Melanchon *underſtands the latter, and makes this the ſence, that* even wiſe mens minds are extremely troubled, when they ſee the wicked prevail againſt the vertuous: *of which he gives a great many examples. But I have taken in both; and have referred it alſo to all manner of ſufferings, and not reſtrained it to publick injuſtice, as the Lord* Bacon *doth; who hath this excellent obſervation upon the place* (*Book VIII. Ch.* 2. *Parab.* 25.) *This Parable teaches us, that* States and Republicks muſt above all things beware of an unjuſt and infamous Sentence, in any cauſe of great importance; eſpecially where the innocent is not abſolved, but he that is not guilty condemned. For injuries ravaging among private perſons do indeed trouble and pollute the ſtreams of juſtice, yet only as in the ſmaller rivulets: but ſuch unjuſt judgments, as I mentioned, from which examples are derived, infect and diſtain the very fountain of Juſtice. For when the Courts of Juſtice ſide with Injuſtice, the ſtate of things is turned, as into a publick Robbery; *& Homo homini ſit lupus,* and one man preys upon another.

[k] *With this verſe,* de Dieu *connects the next,* v. 27. *and gives the eaſieſt account that I find any where, of the* Hebrew *Text: only tranſlating that particle,* but; *which we tranſlate* ſo; *as it is often taken in the Scripture. And his ſence is this;* "*Though the juſt may be* "*trampled under foot for a while by the* "*wicked, yet their glory ſhall not periſh: but* "*remain ſo freſh and ſweet, that it ſhall be a* "*glorious thing to enquire into their glorious* "*actions. So he would have the verſe tranſlated thus,* to eat much honey indeed is not good; but to ſearch out their glory (viz. *of juſt men*) is glory. *And if we take the verſe by itſelf, then the ſence may be this, as the* Belgick *Interpreters tranſlate it* (*of whom he, if I miſtake not, was one*) to eat much honey is not good: but to ſearch into excellent things is a great commendation; and we cannot therein eaſily offend by exceſs: *which is quite contrary to the* Vulgar Latin, *whoſe ſence and meaning* (*though not the words*) *may be defended, even without repeating the word* not, *as we do in our tranſlation: in this manner:* As honey, though pleaſant to the taſte, oppreſſes the ſtomach, if it be immoderately uſed: ſo upon a curious ſearch into things ſublime and glorious (tho' they be moſt ſweet and deſirable to our underſtanding) we ſhall find ourſelves overwhelmed with a greater glory than we can bear. *And ſo the latter part of the verſe, ſhould word for word be thus tranſlated:* The ſearch of their glory (viz. *of things as ſweet as honey, but tranſcending our knowledge*) is glory: *viz. too bright for our weak minds.*

[l] *The laſt verſe, which in the* Hebrew *belongs to all men, whoſe paſſions are unruly, is by the* Vulgar *reſtrained to him that cannot command his tongue: which is part of the ſence. For as men may go out of a City without Walls when they will; ſo every thing is blurted out by him, even the greateſt ſecrets; and by too much liberty he diſobliges others and undoes himſelf.*

Ver. 1. THESE are *alſo proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.*] Beſides the foregoing leſſons ſententiouſly delivered by *Solomon*; theſe alſo were collected out of his Works, by ſome of the Servants of that good King *Hezekiah*: who ſetting himſelf with all his heart to reform the people of *Judah*; among other things wherein God bleſſed his endeavours (2 *Chron.* XXXI. 21.) cauſed

cauſed theſe Proverbs to be tranſcribed out of the ancient records, for their fuller inſtruction. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. It is *the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings* is *to ſearch out a matter.*] The Almighty Creator and Sovereign of the world declares his ſupereminent Majeſty, Authority and Wiſdom (which cannot be ignorant of any thing) and procures to himſelf the greateſt veneration, by concealing the reaſons of his decrees, and of his judgments: But earthly Princes, whoſe knowledge is very imperfect, do themſelves the greateſt honour, when they decree and judge nothing but after the ſtricteſt ſearch and examination, and give the cleareſt reaſon for their proceedings. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings* is *unſearchable.*] It is as impoſſible for vulgar minds to penetrate into the ſecrets of State, and underſtand the counſels and deſigns of wiſe Princes (and the various ways and means whereby they project to effect their ends) as it is to know how far it is from hence to the higheſt heavens; or how far to the centre of the earth, upon which we tread. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *Take away the droſs from the ſilver, and there ſhall come forth a veſſel for the finer.*] As when the Finer hath ſeparated the droſs from the ſilver, it will become ſo pliable, that he may caſt or work it into what form he pleaſeth.

Ver. 5. *Take away the wicked* from *before the king, and his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs.*] So let the King not only remove the wicked (who are the ſcum of the Nation) from his counſels and company but puniſh them ſeverely; and his people will be eaſily moulded to righteouſneſs, piety and all manner of vertue: which will ſettle his Kingdom in peace, and make his Government durable.

Ver. 6. *Put not forth thy ſelf in the preſence of the king, and ſtand not in the place of great* men.] And among other vertues, learn humility and modeſty, if thou art a Subject: though never ſo rich: and do not make thyſelf taken notice of, by too ſplendid an appearance at Court: much leſs by intruding thyſelf into the place, where none but the great officers or Nobles ought to come. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 7. *For better* it is *that it be ſaid unto thee, Come up hither: then that thou ſhouldeſt be put lower in the preſence of the prince whom thine eyes have ſeen.*] For it will be much more for thine honour, and thy ſatisfaction too, if ſtanding at a diſtance, thou art invited to come up higher (whither of thyſelf thou durſt not preſume to go) than to have a check given thee for thy forwardneſs, and to be diſgracefully thruſt out of the preſence of the Prince; unto whom thou haſt adventured to approach too near.

Ver. 8. *Go not forth haſtily to ſtrive, leſt* thou know not *what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to ſhame.*] Take ſome time to conſider well, both the goodneſs of thy cauſe, and its weightineſs, and how to manage it, before thou bring an action at Law againſt thy neighbour; leſt in concluſion thou wiſh it had not been begun; when he puts thee to open ſhame, by ſhewing thou haſt impleaded him wrongfully, or for a trifle.

Ver. 9. *Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour* himſelf; *and diſcover not a ſecret to another.*] Nay, let me adviſe thee, though thy cauſe be juſt and good (yet the event being doubtful) to debate things privately, and if it be poſſible to make up the difference between yourſelves; eſpecially if it be about a ſecret buſineſs, which ought not eaſily to be divulged: or if it cannot be compoſed, yet let not hatred or anger provoke thee to diſcover other ſecrets, merely to diſgrace thy adverſary, when they appertain not to the cauſe.

Ver. 10. *Leſt he that heareth* it *put thee to ſhame, and thine infamy turn not away.*] Leſt not only every one that heareth, reproach thee for thy perfidiouſneſs; but he be inraged to retort ſuch infamous things upon thee, as ſhall ſtick ſo cloſe, that thou ſhalt never be able to wipe off the dirt, nor recover thy credit, as long as thou liveſt.

Ver. 11. *A word fitly ſpoken,* is like *apples of gold in pictures of ſilver.*] A word of counſel, reproof or comfort handſomely delivered, in due time, and place, *&c.* is no leſs grateful and valuable; than golden balls, or beautiful apples, preſented in a ſilver net-work basket. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 12. As *an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold,* ſo is *a wiſe reprover upon an obedient ear.*] A good man will not think himſelf reproached, but rather obliged by a prudent reproof: which meeting with an attentive, conſidering and patient mind, makes a man receive it ſo kindly; that he eſteems him who beſtows it, as much as if he had hung a jewel of gold in his ear or put the richeſt ornament about his neck.

Ver. 13. *As the cold of ſnow in the time of harveſt,* ſo is *a faithful meſſenger to them that ſend him: for he refreſheth the ſoul of his maſters.*] A truſty meſſenger (or Embaſſador) that faithfully and dexterouſly, executes his commiſſion, to the ſatisfaction of the perſons that ſent him; is as welcome, when he returns, as the coldeſt drink or air is to the Reapers in the time of harveſt: for he revives the ſpirit of his Maſters, who were ready to faint, with fear of ill ſucceſs in his buſineſs.

Ver. 14. *Whoſo boaſteth himſelf of a falſe gift* is like *clouds and wind without rain.*] He that raiſeth high expectations by promiſing much, and then deceives them by performing little or nothing; leaves him, that depended on theſe promiſes, as ſad as the Country people are; after the clouds have made a great ſhow, and the wind a great ſound, but are followed by no ſhowers of rain.

Ver.

Ver. 15. *By long forbearing is a prince perſuaded, and a ſoft tongue breaketh the bone.*] It is not prudent violently to oppoſe a Prince in his reſolutions; who will more eaſily yield to reaſon, if one give way to his heat, and patiently expect the fitteſt time to repreſent things to him: but this muſt be done alſo with ſoft and tender language; which is apt to bow the ſtiffeſt minds, and work upon the hardeſt hearts.

Ver. 16. *Haſt thou found honey? eat ſo much as is ſufficient for thee, leſt thou be filled therewith and vomit it.*] All pleaſures ſhould be uſed like honey; which when it offers itſelf, eat as much as ſuffices thee for thy refreſhment, not as much as thou deſireſt: for as moderately taken it ſtrengthens the body, and prolongs life; ſo too much of it diſturbs the ſtomach, and turns the pleaſure into pain and torment. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 17. *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's houſe: leſt he be weary of thee, and ſo hate thee.*] Which is wholeſome advice, even in the enjoyment of a good Neighbour, or Friend (the ſweeteſt thing in the world) do not upon every light occaſion interrupt his weightier affairs: leſt having too much of thy company, it grow not only troubleſome but loathſome to him; and his love turn into hatred of thee.

Ver. 18. *A man that beareth falſe witneſs againſt his neighbour,* is *a maul, and a ſword, and a ſharp arrow.*] There is nothing more pernicious than him, that makes no Conſcience of bearing falſe witneſs againſt his neighbour; whoſe tongue alone ſerves him inſtead of a maul to beat down a man's fame, or break in pieces his eſtate; nay, inſtead of a ſword, to take away his life, and of a ſharp arrow, to deſtroy him, not only when he is near, but much more when he is afar off, not able to anſwer for himſelf.

Ver. 19. *Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble* is like *a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*] As a broken tooth or leg out of joint, not only fails a man, when he comes to uſe them, but likewiſe puts him into pain; ſo doth a faithleſs perſon ſerve them that depend upon him, when they have the greateſt need of his help: and ſuch alſo is the confidence that a faithleſs perſon himſelf places in riches, or craft, or great friends, *&c.* which ſome time or other will diſappoint him to his great grief, when he expects the moſt from them.

Ver. 20. As *he that taketh away a garment in cold weather,* and as *vinegar upon nitre: ſo is he that ſingeth ſongs to an heavy heart.*] It is as improper to ſing pleaſant ſongs to a man full of grief as to take away his garment from him in ſharp weather, or to pour vinegar upon nitre; for as the one increaſeth his ſenſe of cold, and the other irritates the nitre; ſo ſuch unſeaſonable mirth makes a ſad man's heart far more heavy and ſorrowfull, than it was before. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 21. *If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirſty, give water to drink.*] If he that hates thee be hungry or thirſty, or wants any other neceſſaries, take the opportunity to expreſs thy kindneſs to him; by ſuccouring him in his need, and thereby preſerving him from periſhing.

Ver. 22. *For thou ſhalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord ſhall reward thee.*] For if he have the leaſt ſpark of goodneſs in him, it will work a change in his mind; and make him throw off all his enmities: or if it have the contrary effect, he ſhall have ſo much the ſorer puniſhment; and thou ſhalt not loſe thy reward, which the LORD himſelf will give thee.

Ver. 23. *The north-wind driveth away rain: ſo* doth *an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*] As the ſharpneſs of the North wind ſcatters clouds, and drives away rain; ſo a ſevere countenance, full of indignation againſt him that traduces his neighbour ſecretly, not only gives a check, but puts a ſtop to his ſlanderous tongue; which would not tell ſuch lyes, if they were not greedily received. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 24. It is *better to dwell in a corner of the houſe-top, than with a brawling woman and in a wide houſe.*] It is more deſirable (as was ſaid before XXI. 9.) to dwell poorly, inconveniently, and alone in the open air, expoſed to all the injuries of the weather; nay, to be coopt up in a little corner on the houſe-top; than to have a ſpacious habitation and numerous family, governed by a contentious brawling wife; whoſe perpetual ſcoldings within doors, upon all occaſions, is far worſe than the thunder, lightning and bluſtering winds, which may moleſt him without.

Ver. 25. As *cold waters to a thirſty ſoul: ſo is good news from a far country.*] Good and certain news, eſpecially from a far Country (from whence it is hard to have any true intelligence) is as grateful to him that longed to hear of his Friends there, as cool water is to a thirſty Traveller; eſpecially when he meets with it in remote and uninhabited places, where he did not expect it.

Ver. 26. *A righteous man falling down before the wicked,* is as *a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring.*] A truly religious, juſt and charitable man, is ſuch a bleſſing

ſing unto all about him, that they ſuffer no leſs when he is oppreſſed (and thrown out of authority) by the violence and craft of wicked men, or when he diſgraces himſelf by any foul ſin, or loſes his courage and dare not oppoſe impiety; than they do, when dirt and filth is caſt into a publick Fountain; or a ſpring is ſtopped up, or corrupted and made uſeleſs. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 27. It is *not good to eat much honey: ſo* for men *to ſearch their own glory*, is not *glory*.] Honey is very pleaſant to the taſte; but to eat much of it (as we ſaid before *v.* 16.) is ſo far from being wholſome, that it is hurtful: and in like manner to hunt greedily after honour and glory, of which men are very deſirous, proves at laſt not honourable, but reproachful to them. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 28. *He that hath no rule over his own ſpirit*, is like *a city* that is *broken down*, and *without walls*.] He that cannot govern his paſſions, eſpecially his anger, but ſuffers them to break out upon all occaſions, lies open to innumerable miſchiefs; like a City unwalled, or whoſe fortifications are decayed; which is expoſed to the rapine of every enemy. *See* Arg. [*l*].

CHAP. XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a taeit admonition unto Kings* (*for whoſe uſe principally this* laſt Part *of the Book of Proverbs was collected, as I noted in the beginning of the foregoing Chapter*) *to be very careful in diſpoſing preferments only to worthy perſons. For bad men are made worſe by them; and they do as much hurt to others, by the abuſe of their power to the diſcouraging of virtue, and promoting vice, as ſnow or hail doth to the fruits of the earth, when they are ripe and ready to be gathered. So that we may make this Aphoriſm out of* Solomon's *words, that* the blending of ſummer and winter, would not cauſe a greater diſorder in the natural world, than the diſpoſal of honour to bad men (and conſequently throwing contempt upon the good) doth in the world moral: *where wicked men when they are in power, if they can do no more, will at leaſt pronounce* Anathema's *againſt thoſe that do not deſerve it.*

[b] *So the* Hebrews *underſtand the next verſe; which I have extended farther: and tranſlated alſo thoſe two words* zippor *and* deror, *a* ſparrow *and a* wild Pigeon (*ſee LXXXIV.* Pſal. 3.) *For* deror *ſignifying here a particular bird; in all likelyhood* zippor *doth ſo too: and then all agree it ſignifies a* ſparrow, *as the other* (Bochart *hath proved*) *doth* (*not a* ſwallow *but*) *a* ring-dove, *or* turtle, *or ſome of that kind; which are famous for ſwiftneſs and ſtrength of flight. And the meaning of this verſe is, that* curſes which fly out of mens mouths cauſeleſly, ſhall no more alight where they would have them; than a ſparrow which wanders uncertainly, or a dove that flies away ſwiftly, will ſettle according to their direction: *or thus,* ſuch curſes fly as ſwiftly as thoſe birds (whoſe propriety it is to wander and fly up and down) over the head of him againſt whom they are directed, and never touch him.

Melanchon *by* curſes *in this place underſtands* calumnies; *of which the world is too full: which ſhall not reſt upon a good man long, before they be confuted. But he himſelf is forced to confeſs, that ſometimes they do great miſchief firſt: and inſtances in* Joſeph, Palamedes, Ariſtides, Theamenes *and* Socrates; *who loſt his life by this means. After which, he obſerves, the Tragedy of* Palamedes *being acted* (*in which the Poet bewailed the death of the beſt of the Greeks, who ſung like a ſweet Nightingale, but hurt no man*) *the Citizens expelled the accuſers of* Socrates *out of* Athens. *But this doth not ſo well agree with the Hebrew word; which ſignifies ſuch evil ſpeaking, as amounts to a* curſe: *which the wiſe man ſaith ſhall not reſt upon a man when it is cauſeleſs, but fly away like a bird that ſettles no where till it comes to its proper place*: As the curſe returns many times, and ſettles upon him that made it, when it lights not on him that was curſed: *which ſenſe, one reading of the Hebrew words expreſſes plainly enough; and therefore I have not omitted it.*

[c] *After which obſervations, there follows another to ſhew, that a lewd fool ſhould rather be ſent to a houſe of correction, than have any preferment,* v. 3. *Nothing leſs will cure him, as it follows,* v. 4, 5. *where he admoniſhes us, how vain it is to hold any diſcourſe with him, any farther than merely to ſhew that he is a fool; and if it be poſſible to confute* (*not what he ſays, but*) *the vain opinion he hath conceived of himſelf. Saint* Cyprian *hath given a good account of theſe two verſes, in the beginning of his Letter to* Demetrian: *who having babbled a long time againſt Chriſtianity, like a mad*

man

man, with loud clamours only and no ſenſe, the good Father thought fit to anſwer him with neglect, and overcome rage with patience; thinking it to no more purpoſe to go about to repreſs an irreligious man with Religion, or reſtrain a mad man with meekneſs, than to offer light to the blind, or ſpeak to the deaf, or reaſon with a brute. But when Demetrian *at laſt offered ſomething that looked like an Argument, St.* Cyprian *could not any longer keep ſilence; leſt his modeſty ſhould be thought diſtruſtful of his cauſe; and whilſt he diſdained to refute falſe criminations, he ſhould ſeem to acknowledge the crime.*

Melanchthon *wholly refers both verſes to reproaches and calumnies: which he ſhews it is fit, either utterly to neglect, or to confute in a few words.*

[d] *Then the Wiſe man proceeds to ſhew, that ſuch a fool is very unfit to be ſo much as ſent on a meſſage; which he will neither deliver right, nor return a good anſwer. The firſt ſeems to be expreſſed by* cutting off the legs; *as much as to ſay, a buſineſs committed to ſuch a perſon, will no more proceed, than a man can go without legs: the latter by* drinking in injury; *as much as to ſay, inſtead of having ſatisfaction in what he deſires, he muſt be content to ſwallow abundance of affronts and ill-dealing.*

[e] *After this follow ſeveral other obſervations about Fools; in ſome of which, there are words of no ſmall difficulty: which I cannot here particularly explain, as ſome may deſire, becauſe it would take up too much room. But I have expreſſed the ſenſe of them as well as I could, in the Paraphraſe. As for example, the word* Dalju *v. 7. ſignifying ſomething of* elevation *or lifting up, I have explained* dancing; *than which nothing is more unſuitable to a lame man: as ſpeeches, full of reaſon in themſelves, are moſt abſurd, when witleſly applied by a fool.*

[f] *And the word* Margema, *in the 8th verſe, which is variouſly tranſlated by Interpreters, I have expreſſed in two ſenſes of it: but look upon it as ſuperfluous to trouble the Reader with what learned men (ſuch as* Scaliger *and* Selden, *&c.) have written concerning the heaps of ſtones in the highway, into which ſuperſtitious people were wont to caſt one as they paſſed by, in honour of* Mercury, *&c. For I do not think this cuſtom was as old as* Solomon's *time. Nor is it neceſſary to underſtand ſuch a heap of ſtones, as covered the dead bodies of thoſe who were ſtoned to death: but in general any heap of pebles; or elſe a* ſling, *as the* Chaldee *and the* LXX. *whom we follow, expound it.*

[g] *And* v. 10. *the firſt word,* rab, great, *may be applied either to God, or to a Prince: and that either good or bad. All which I have taken notice of; and expreſſed the different ſenſes wherein the word* cholalti *is uſed. But there is one ſignification more of the word* rab, *which the* Lutherans *generally follow (which I think fit to mention here, becauſe I have not touched on it in the Paraphraſe, and it makes no improper ſenſe of the place) who take it for a* Maſter *in any ſort of Art or Learning; and expound it thus:* A maſter in his art forms all things excellently well: but he that hires a fool (*or a* bungler, *as we ſpeak*) gives his money to have his work ſpoiled. *Thus* Melanchthon; *who takes it to be an Admonition belonging to prudence in the choice of fit perſons for every buſineſs; not believing thoſe that crack and brag what they are able to do, &c. ex. gr.* plurimi ſunt impoſtores, qui volunt videri medici: plurimi indocti concionatores, qui adulantur vulgo aut potentioribus. *And he heaps up many excellent ſayings to this purpoſe, that men* ſhould meddle only with that which they underſtand: *concluding with this Admonition to the people, which they ſhould always remember:* Ignorance makes men impudent. *And thus* Caſtalio *took the word* rab; *but to this ſenſe,* A wiſe man does his buſineſs himſelf; and not by fools, who marr it all.

[h] *Among other examples of the Wiſe man's obſervations* v. 11. Melanchthon *mentions this; which is not commonly noted. The* Sodomites *being divinely delivered by the help of* Abraham, *who overthrew the Army that had ſpoiled them, and recovered the ſpoil; forgetting their former puniſhment and marvellous deliverance, ran furiouſly into more foul ſins, wherein they utterly periſhed, by a moſt terrible vengeance.*

[i] *Then follow, after one obſervation concerning a conceited fellow, ſeveral obſervations about* ſloth: *ſome of which have been noted before in the foregoing parts of this Book, but are here put together by the* men *of* Hezekiah *in ſome order; and with ſome additions. For here ſeems to be* three *degrees of ſloth repreſented. The* firſt, *when a man is loth to ſtir out of doors, about his buſineſs in the field,* v. 13. *the* ſecond, *when he is loth ſo much as to leave his bed,* v. 14. *and the* third *and higheſt, when he will ſcarce put his hand to his mouth,* v. 15. *by which hyperbolical expreſſion he moſt admirably ſets forth the incredible lazineſs of ſome men; which increaſes upon them continually, if they will not ſhake it off. And yet ſo preſumptuous (he obſerves, v. 16.) they are withal, that they laugh at thoſe, who take a great deal of pains to be wiſe: and fanſie themſelves much wiſer, becauſe, without any pains, they can find faults ſometime in other mens works. Nay, this very thing perhaps, they think a piece of ſkill, to*

ſtudy

ſtudy hard; imagining it to be the greateſt wiſdom, to enjoy their eaſe, and reap the benefit of other mens labours. After which follows an Admonition againſt raſh intermeddling in other mens affairs; againſt backbiters, and diſſemblers; eſpecially, ſuch as are malicious; and cover the malignity of their minds, under fair ſhews of love, or perhaps of Friendſhip. In ſeveral of which verſes the words are capable of more ſenſes than one; which I have endeavoured to knit together in the Paraphraſe. An example of which I might give particularly, in v. 24. *where the word* jinnaker *may be rendred either* he pretends to be what he is not, *or* he is known to be what he is.

[k] *And what* Solomon *ſays in the next verſe concerning him that* flattereth *another, ſome extend to all wicked men; none of which are to be truſted: but as one of our own Writers adviſes,* though a wicked man have done thee ſeven courteſies, and promiſe fair for the eighth; yet do not truſt him: for there are ſeven abominations in his heart. And though thou may'ſt think thou haſt ſome hank upon him, do not depend upon it; for he can unfetter himſelf from them all, as *Sampſon* from the green withs and cords, wherewith the *Philiſtines* bound him, unleſs GOD mightily reſtrain him.

[l] *But I only obſerve one thing more; that the laſt verſe is capable of this ſenſe; which I have in part touched:* A Lyar is not capable to be a Friend; for if he be reprehended, truth makes him hate the perſon that detects his falſehood: if he be not reprehended, his fulſome flatteries will alienate from him, the mind of his Friend.

Ver. 1. *AS ſnow in ſummer, and as rain in harveſt, ſo honour is not ſeemly for a fool.*] As ſnow or rain are ſo unſeaſonable, that they do a great deal of hurt in ſummer time, when the fruits of the earth are ready to be gathered: ſo is dignity and authority very ill placed in the hands of a fool or wicked man; who knows not how to uſe it, but will do miſchief both to himſelf and others with it. *See* Arg. [a].

Ver. 2. *As the bird by wandring, as the ſwallow by flying, ſo the curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not come.*] Tho' men are too prone in their paſſion to wiſh evil to others, or by miſtake to pronounce ſolemn curſes againſt them; yet there is no reaſon to fear ſuch raſh imprecations or unjuſt cenſures: for they ſhall do no harm (unleſs it be to him that makes them) but paſs by the innocent like a ſparrow, that wanders no body knows whither; or a wild dove, than which few birds fly away more ſwiftly. *See* Arg. [b].

Ver. 3. *A whip for the horſe, a bridle for the aſs, and a rod for the fool's back.*] A horſe that will not ſtir without a whip, and an aſs that will not go without a goad, or will go only his own way, without a bridle to turn about his ſtiff neck; are fit emblems of a ſenſeleſs ſot: who muſt be treated like a beaſt, and by ſmart puniſhments be excited unto his duty, to which he hath no liſt; and check'd from running into that evil, to which he is inclined.

Ver. 4. *Anſwer not a fool according to his folly, leſt thou alſo be like unto him.*] For words will not reclaim a wicked fool; with whom if thou haſt occaſion to contend, obſerve theſe two Rules: Anſwer him not at all, becauſe it is to no purpoſe; at leaſt, not in his own way, with bawling, railing and reproaches, which is to be as very a fool as himſelf. *See* Arg. [c].

Ver. 5. *Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit.*] But if he grow inſolent by thy ſilence, fancying that he is unanſwerable; then ſay ſo much only as may ſerve to take down his preſumption, and make it appear that he is a fool: for nothing is more dangerous, than to let him go away with an high opinion of his own abilities.

6. *He that ſendeth a meſſage by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet and drinketh damage.*] He that ſends a witleſs man, or one that minds nothing but his pleaſure, to treat about his buſineſs; ſhall be ſure not only to miſcarry in it, but to ſuffer exceeding great damage by his ill management. *See* Arg. [d].

Ver. 7. *The legs of the lame are not equal: ſo is a parable in the mouth of fools.*] A wiſe ſaying as ill becomes a fool, as dancing doth a cripple: for as his lameneſs never ſo much appears, as when he would ſeem nimble; ſo the others folly is never ſo ridiculous, as when he would ſeem wiſe. *See* Arg. [e].

Ver. 8. *As he that bindeth a ſtone in a ſling: ſo is he that giveth honour to a fool.*] As a ſtone put into a ſling, ſtays not long there, ſo is that honour thrown away is beſtowed upon a fool: who not knowing how to uſe his Authority (unleſs it be to do miſchief, even to him that conferred it on him) it is as ill placed in his hands, as a diamond when it is caſt into a heap of common ſtones. *See* Arg. [f].

Ver. 9. *As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, ſo is a parable in the mouth of fools.*] It is as dangerous for

a

a fool to meddle with a proverb, as for a drunkard to handle a thorn; wherewith he hurts himself: but the sharpest saying, no more touches a fool with any compunction, though spoken by his own mouth; than the drunkard feels the thorn, when it runs into his hand, and gives a grievous wound.

Ver. 10. *The great* God, *that formed all* things, *both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth the transgressors.* The Great God, who made all things, governs them also most wisely and equally; dispensing, for instance, his punishments suitable to mens sins, whether out of ignorance, or of wilful wickedness: whom a good Prince imitates; but a bad proves an universal grievance, by employing either fools or prophane persons in his service; who vex the rest of his Subjects. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 11. *As a dog returneth to his vomit; so a fool returneth to his folly.*] As a dog, when he hath vomited up the meat which made him sick, is no sooner well but he returns to it and eats it up again; forgetting how ill it agreed with him: so an imprudent person commits the same error over again, for which he formerly smarted; and a lewd sinner shamelessly and greedily repeats the crimes, of which he hath repented as grievous and hurtful to him. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 12. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit?* there is *more hope of a fool than of him.* Such a sottish person is hardly curable: and yet if he be not altogether insensible of his folly, nor refuse admonition; there is more hope of his amendment, than of his who takes himself to be so wise and virtuous, that he despises his betters, and thinks he is above instruction.

Ver. 13. *The slothful* man *saith,* There is *a lion in the way, a lion* is *in the streets.* He that hath no mind to labour, never wants pretences for his idleness: for his fancy represents such terrible and insuperable difficulties to him, as seldom happen; and frights him with a vain conceit of them, when he might soon satisfy himself, there are none at all. *See* Arg. [*i*]. *See* XXII. 13.

Ver. 14. As *the door turneth upon its hinges, so* doth *the slothful upon his bed.*] As a door turns to and fro upon its hinges, but never stirs from thence; so is a sluggard fixed to his bed: where he turns from one side to the other (and is uneasy even in his sloth) but still remains in his idle posture.

Ver. 15. *The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom, it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.*] All things seem so hard to such a lazy wretch, that it is not easy to persuade him to pull his hand from under his arm: but even this appears like a tiresome business, though it be only to put his meat into his mouth. *See* XIX. 24.

Ver. 16. *The sluggard* is *wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.*] Yet one of these idle companions, whose wit serves him only to prate, and carp at mens honest labours; takes himself to be much wiser than a great many able persons, who can give a satisfactory account of any thing that is proposed to them.

Ver. 17. *He that passeth by* and *meddleth with strife* belonging *not to him,* is like *one that taketh a dog by the ears.*] As he that takes an angry dog by the ears, is in danger to be bitten; whether he hold him, or let him go: so he that furiously ingages in other mens quarrels, whom he lights upon by chance, and in which he is not concerned, shall hardly escape the displeasure of one or both of them, which soever part he takes, or if he take neither.

Ver. 18. *As a mad* man *who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death:*] As he that throws flames, darts, or other deadly or destructive things, and hides his malice by feigning himself mad; is far more dangerous than he that is mad indeed:

Ver. 19. *So* is *the man* that *deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?*] So he is worse than an open enemy, who cunningly abuses his neighbour, and under a fair shew puts foul cheats upon him; and then asks him, Why he resents it so heinously? for he was only in jest; and intended merely to try how he would take it.

Ver. 20. *Where no wood is,* there *the fire goeth out: so where* there is *no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth.*] Look upon him as an incendiary, that carries tales and whispers false stories; and expel him from the family which he hath disturbed by back-biting; for as the fire will go out, if you take away the wood that feeds it; so will quarrels and contentions cease, when he is thrust out of doors that blows up the flame.

Ver. 21. As *coals* are *to burning coals, and wood to fire: so* is *a contentious man to kindle strife.*] Avoid also an angry man, who is hard to please, and apt to find fault with every thing; for provoking language as quickly passes into quarrels, as dead coals do into burning, or wood into fire, when they are laid upon them.

Ver. 22. *The words of a tale-bearer* are *as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*] But there is never need of greater caution, than when a whisperer makes a shew of harmless intentions, and of love and kindness, when he

he traduces others; nay ſeems perhaps to do it very unwillingly, and with great grief of heart; and not without excuſes alſo, for the perſons whom he backbites: for his words are ſtabs, which give them the moſt deadly wounds; and ſink deep into the minds of thoſe that hear them. *See* XVIII. 8.

Ver. 23. *Burning lips, and a wicked heart,* are like *a potſherd covered with ſilver droſs.*] Ill and angry language ſuits as well with ill will, as ſilver droſs with a piece of a broken pot: and he that ſtudies to hide his hatred under moſt affectionate words will as certainly be detected and vilified; as a potſherd that makes a fair ſhew at a diſtance when it is covered merely with the ſcum of ſilver.

Ver. 24. *He that healeth, diſſembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him.*] And yet there is nothing more uſual, than for him that hates thee, to counterfeit the greateſt kindneſs to thee; when he means thereby only the more eaſily and ſecurely to deceive and undoe thee: though let him ſtudy never ſo much to diſguiſe his inward rancour, he commonly lets fall ſome word or other, whereby it may be diſcovered; nay, it may be known ſometime by his extraordinary expreſſions of Friendſhip, beyond all reaſon and meaſure.

Ver. 25. *When he ſpeaketh fair, believe him not: for* there are *ſeven abominations in his heart.*] And thou wilt the more certainly diſcover it, if thou obſerveſt this Rule, not to be too credulous; no, not when he gives thee the kindeſt words, and beſeeches thee to believe him: but to remember, that if hatred ſtill remain in his heart, it will ſuggeſt to him the moſt deteſtable deſigns againſt thee, and that without number. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 26. Whoſe *hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedneſs ſhall be ſhewed before the* whole *congregation.*] And it were well, if ſuch a man would think, that it is hard for him to carry on his malicious deſigns ſo craftily, but, though a private perſon may not be able to find out his wickedneſs, yet, when he comes to be examined by the publick Council, ſome or other will diſcover it: and then that diſſembled hatred, which he thought to have hid in ſecreſy, will be openly expoſed to the view of all the world.

Ver. 27. *Whoſo diggeth a pit, ſhall fall therein: and he that rowleth a ſtone, it will return upon him.*] For by the righteous judgment of GOD (as hath been anciently obſerved VII. *Pſal.* 15. IX. 15.) the wicked are not only diſappointed in their deſigns, but involve themſelves in that miſchief, which they intended to do to others: juſt like a man that falls into a pit, digged with his own hands; or that is cruſhed in pieces by a ſtone, which returns upon him, as he rowls it up a ſteep place for the oppreſſion of another.

Ver. 28. *A lying tongue hateth* thoſe that are *afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.*] A forger of falſhood is not content to undo others by his calumnies, but his guilt makes him hate thoſe men above all others; unleſs it be him that confutes his falſhood and proves him a lyar: whom he cannot endure, becauſe he diſables him from doing any farther miſchief unto others; which is the deſign of all his gloſſing and flattering words, which prove at laſt the ruin of himſelf. *See* Arg. [*l*].

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a moſt uſeful Admonition, of the inconſtancy and uncertainty of all things here below: like to which there are a great many in other Authors, which ſeveral Writers have collected (but I ſhall not trouble the Readers withal) particularly* Melanchon: *who obſerves that the Wiſe man here teaches us* modeſty; *and prohibits theſe* two *great vices:* confidence in ourſelves, *or any thing we have; and* raſh undertaking neceſſary things, *out of a fooliſh hope they will ſucceed according to our deſires.* Wiſe and good men ſhould only meddle within the bounds of their calling; and depend alſo on GOD for his bleſſing: *but not attempt things without juſt cauſe, preſuming they can carry them as they pleaſe. Thus* Pericles, *ſays he, made an unneceſſary War, for a ſlight reaſon; which many then judged to have been neglected: and* Alcibiades *in like manner paſſed over into* Sicily: *and* Hannibal *made war upon the* Romans: *and* Pompey *would needs try his fortune (as they called it) in War, when he might have kept peace, upon honeſt conditions. All theſe were deſtructive to their Countries, and the* Proverb *was verified in them* Μάταιοι μάταια λογίζονται ἢ ἐνθυμίας, Vain men deviſe vain things, according as their deſires lead them.

[b] *And there is nothing more fooliſh than the vanity of praiſing themſelves; which follows in the next verſe* (v. 2.) *and is noted by all Authors; who have many ſharp ſayings about it, which I alſo paſs over. But ſhall take notice (becauſe it is ſtill more uſeful)* what

what the ſame good man Melanchthon *obſerves upon the* third *verſe; that* fools and unskilful people are more apt to be angry than others: *becauſe they conſider not the infirmity of mankind, and that there are many errors of others which ought to be born withal, and cured after a gentle manner: whence that true ſaying* Imperito nunquam quicquam injuſtius eſt. *But as goodneſs is moſt eminent in God; who himſelf bears with many evils in us, and commands us to* forgive and it ſhall be forgiven us: *ſo wiſe men bend their minds to goodneſs and lenity; remembring the common infirmities of all men, their own as well as others. Nor can there be a more lively picture of the implacable ſpirit of a fool, than that which our Saviour himſelf hath drawn in the Goſpel; of a cruel Servant, who when he had been forgiven* ſixty ton *of gold by his Maſter, would not forgive his fellow-ſervant an* hundred pence, Matth. *XVIII. This Sentence of* Solomon *therefore, ſaith he, admoniſhes us to avoid the company of fools,* qui neque cognoſcere neque ignoſcere norunt; *as well as to be ſo wiſe ourſelves as to moderate our paſſions, and to be mindful of human weakneſs. For* nihil magnum quod non eſt placidum, *as* Seneca *ſpeaks: like unto which he adds other ſayings out of* Homer *and* Pliny.

[c] *In the next verſe but one ſome think the Wiſe man ſpeaks of ſuch Friends as are too tender and delicate; and for fear of offending others, have not the courage to tell them of their errors: whom the great Lord* Bacon *follows; and thinks* Solomon prefers an open Enemy before ſuch a Friend: *which I do not take to be the meaning; but ſhall here ſet down his excellent obſervation upon theſe words* (Adv. of Learn. *Book VIII. Ch. 2. Parab. 29.*) "*The Parable, ſaith he, reprehends the ſoft nature of ſuch Friends as will not uſe the privilege which Friendſhip gives them, in admoniſhing their Friends with freedom and confidence, as well of their errors as of their dangers.* For what ſhall I do? *ſays ſuch a tender-hearted Friend,* or which way ſhall I turn myſelf? I love him as dearly as any man can do another: and if any misfortune ſhould befall him, I could willingly pawn my own perſon for his redemption. But I know his diſpoſition; if I deal freely with him, I ſhall offend him; at leaſt make him ſad: and yet do him no good. And I ſhall ſooner eſtrange him from my Friendſhip, than reclaim him from thoſe courſes, upon which his mind is reſolved: *Such a Friend as this,* Solomon *here reprehends as weak and worthleſs, and ſays that a man may reap more profit from a manifeſt Enemy, than from ſuch an effeminate Friend. For he may perhaps hear that by way of reproach from an Enemy, which, through too much indulgence, was faintly whiſpered by a Friend.*

[d] *And one great reaſon why men are loth to tell others of their faults, is becauſe they are wont to take it heinouſly. If men were more willing to receive reproof, others would more faithfully give it: of which the wiſe man therefore admoniſhes us,* v. 6. *where the word* Nataroth *is ſo difficult that it admits various interpretations: ſome of which I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe. And made* v. 7. *a caution againſt the immoderate enjoyment of pleaſures: which commend themſelves to us, by their rarer us. As the next,* v. 8. *is a caution againſt unſettledneſs of mind, and diſcontent with our preſent condition; which not only ſpoils all our pleaſures, but, often carries men reſtleſly to their ruin: where* Melanchthon *ſuggeſts this uſeful Meditation, that there is no condition of life, no function, without its cares, troubles and dangers; which makes men ſoon weary of it: according to the ancient ſaying,* Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus. *But the Wiſe man would have us underſtand, that nothing is more dangerous than this; and therefore to take care, leſt tired and broken with diſguſts, we lightly deſert that kind of life, to which we are rightly called. All the ancient wiſdom hath obſerved, that ſuch deſultory humours never thrive: about which they have many Proverbs, with which I ſhall not fill theſe papers.*

[e] *After this follow ſome advices about Friendſhip, and other things; which have been noted before, in the foregoing parts of this Book. And then he ſeems* v. 14. *to lay open the guiſe of Flatterers, who hope to curry favour with their Benefactors, by extolling their bounty with extravagant praiſes. So I have expounded that verſe, not merely of thoſe that praiſe others, but praiſe them for their kindneſs to themſelves: as the word* Barak *properly imports. The intention of which is only to get ſtill more from them: which is commonly the end of all thoſe, that praiſe others immoderately, for their rare qualities and perfections; hoping thereby to make them extraordinary kind to them, above all other men. Thus the Lord* Bacon *hath obſerved about this matter: whoſe gloſs upon theſe words is this (in the forenamed place,* Parable 33.) "*Moderate and ſeaſonable praiſes, uttered upon occaſion, conduce both to mens fame and fortune; but immoderate, ſtreperous and unſeaſonably poured out, profit nothing: nay, rather according to the ſenſe of this Parable, they do much prejudice. For, firſt, they manifeſtly betray themſelves, either to proceed* from too much affection, *or from* ſtudious affectation; *whereby they may rather in-*

"*gratiate*

" *gratiate themſelves with him whom they*
" *praiſe by falſe commendations; than adorn*
" *his perſon by juſt and deſerved attributes:*
" ſecondly, *ſparing and modeſt praiſes*
" *commonly invite ſuch as are preſent* to
" ſomething of their own to the com-
" mendation: *contrariwiſe, profuſe and im-*
" *modeſt praiſes invite the hearers to* detract
" and take away ſomething that belongs
" to them: *thirdly (which is the princi-*
" *pal point)* too much magnifying a
" man ſtirs up envy towards him: ſee-
" ing all immoderate praiſes look like a
" reproach to others, who merit no leſs.

But beſide this, I cannot quite paſs by the gloſs which ſome have made upon theſe words: who by jaſchkem babboker *(which I have applied only to their too much aſſiduity in praiſing others, as if one ſhould ſay,* from morning to night) *underſtand making too much haſte to praiſe men; when it is, as we ſpake, but* early days with them: *and they have made no progreſs in thoſe virtues for which they are commended. And then the ſenſe is,* there is nothing more dangerous, than to cry up men too ſoon, for their parts or for their virtues; before they be ſufficiently tried, and have made a due improvement: for this, inſtead of doing them ſervice, proves many times their ruin: *making them, that is, entertain a vain opinion of their own worth, and grow idle, or negligent,* &c. *and ſo dwindle away to nothing.*

[f] *What he ſaith afterward of* a railing wife, v. 16. *may be thus expreſſed, in ſhort:* There are three things that cannot be concealed; becauſe they betray themſelves: the wind, a ſtrong perfume, and a ſcolding wife: *with which ſome joyn the next verſe,* v. 17. *as a remedy for the miſchief of a brawling Wife; and thus render it:* as iron is eaſily joyned with iron; ſo is a man with his equal. *And therefore the beſt way for a man to avoid the trouble of a bad wife, is not to chuſe one for his conſort, becauſe ſhe is rich, or becauſe ſhe is beautiful only; but becauſe ſhe is like him in humour, and inclination, and condition,* &c. *Thus the* Tigurine *Verſion. And* de Dieu *to the ſame purpoſe; who makes this Proverb, no more than that of* like to like; *which beſt agree together. But this is too narrow; and therefore I have followed our, and indeed all the ancient Tranſlations: who take this to be of the ſame ſignification with another old ſaying,* one man is no body; *and therefore God hath formed us to have a communion with each other. The neceſſity of which is expreſſed in abundance of ancient Aphoriſms; which admoniſh us to conferr with others, and to hearken to the counſel and judgment of the wiſe. And daily experience ſhews us how dangerous is it* ἰδιοβουλεύειν, to be a man's own counſellor *and what is ſaid of Artificers may be applied unto all;* every man is his own worſt Maſter. *To which purpoſe* Melanchon *alledges that of* Euripides ὁμιλία ἔτικτε τέχνας, converſation brought forth arts: *when men, that is, not only obſerved one another's works; but conferred their thoughts together; and aſſiſted one another's inventions.* " *And he per-*
" *tinently obſerves, that the Chriſtian Doc-*
" *trine, in the beginning of the Reformati-*
" *on, was corrupted by thoſe, who* ☞ *would*
" *not hear others: but skulk'd like bats that*
" *fly the light; and deviſed new opinions*
" *out of their own heads, abhorrent from*
" *the approved form of Doctrine.* Tales
" multi nunc ſunt, *&c. There are many*
" *ſuch now adays, who glory that they are*
" αὐτοδίδακτοι, *and admire their own dreams;*
" *refuſing to hearken to the ſound judg-*
" *ment of other men. But let us, ſaith*
" *he, be obedient to ſuch precepts as this:*
" *which includes in it, firſt* Modeſty, *in*
" *conſideration of our own frailty; and then*
" Prudence, *in adviſing with thoſe, who*
" *may teach us that of which we are ig-*
" *norant. Thus he obſerves out of* Syneſi-
" us, *that* Apelles *was wont to make*
" Lyſippus *the Statuary, Judge of all his*
" *Pictures: and* Lyſippus, *on the other ſide,*
" *made* Apelles *Judge of all his Statues;*
" *before they would expoſe them to be ſeen*
" *by others.*

[g] *The next verſe but one,* v. 19. *is underſtood ſo variouſly by Interpreters, that it is a labour to number their expoſitions: ſome of which are directly contrary to the other. For according as they take the* face *to be repreſented in* water; *either* perfectly, *or ſo* lubricouſly *and* moveably, *that it is hard to diſcern what ſort of face it is: ſo they make it either* eaſy, *or* impoſſible *to underſtand the hearts of other men.* Melanchon *took it in the latter ſenſe; inculcating the old wholſome Leſſons* Μίμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, *and* Quos credis fidos, effuge, tutus eris, *&c. But now it is generally expounded the other way: and ſome expound it of mens own hearts, and ſome of the hearts of other men. I have in the Paraphraſe expreſſed* two *of thoſe Interpretations, which I look'd upon as moſt ſimple. And think fit here to mention that of* Caſtalio, *who applies it to a man's ſelf in this manner:* as a man may know what kind of face he hath, if he will look into the water; ſo he may know what kind of man he is, if he will examine his Conſcience. *And this of* Maldonate *who is alone (as far as I can find) in his expoſition, which is this,* as a man's face may be ſeen in the water; ſo his heart, or his inward affections, may be ſeen in his Countenance: *taking* man *in the concluſion of the Sentence, for the outward man,* i. e. *his countenance: and making the* He-

brew

brew *run thus*, as a man's face is anſwerable to that face which appears in the water: ſo his heart is anſwerable to his countenance. *The Lord* Bacon *as I have expreſſed it in the beginning of my Paraphraſe on this verſe, takes the end of this Parable to be,* "*to diſtinguiſh be-*"*tween the mind of wiſe men, and of* "*thoſe that are not wiſe: comparing the* "*former to* waters, *or* glaſſes *which re-*"*ceive and repreſent the forms and images* "*of things; whereas the other are like to* "earth *or* rude *and* unpoliſhed ſtone, "*wherein nothing is reflected. And the mind* "*of a wiſe man (which is ſo capable that it* "*obſerves and comprehends an infinite di-*"*verſity of natures and cuſtoms) is the* "*more aptly compared to a* glaſs *or mir-*"*rour; becauſe in a glaſs he can ſee his* "*own image, together with the images of* "*other men: which his eyes cannot do a-*"*lone without the help of a glaſs.*"

And ſo this Parable, it ſeems to me, may not unfitly be expounded after this manner: A man may ſee himſelf while he looks upon other men; as well as know other men by conſidering his own inclinations.

[h] *This Preface is already ſo long, that I muſt not mention the various interpretations of the twenty-firſt verſe. I have expreſſed that which is neareſt to our Tranſlation; and ſeems to be the trueſt touchſtone of this ſort, whereby to try the goodneſs or badneſs of mens minds. Some of which are ſo incorrigible, he ſhews in the next verſe, that the ſoreſt afflictions will not amend them.*

[i] *And then in concluſion he preſſes every one to diligence about his own buſineſs: and eſpecially commends the paſtoral care, which men ſhould have about their flocks and their herds: which are the beſt ſort of poſſeſſions, he ſhews, in ſeveral regards.* Firſt, *Becauſe moſt durable, for they are always increaſing of themſelves,* v. 24. Secondly, *Becauſe eaſily preſerved without much labour, or fraudulent arts; God himſelf providing liberally for them,* v. 25. Thirdly, *Becauſe moſt profitable; yielding all things neceſſary for food and raiment,* v. 26, 27.

[k] *Where he mentions particularly in the laſt verſe, the* milk of the goats, *and of no other creature: becauſe they had abundance of them, and their milk was in daily uſe; both for meat and for medicine. And for medicine the Ancients preferred it before all other, as moſt moderate and temperate. So* Galen *and* Paulus Ægineta, *the laſt of which writes thus:* Woman's milk is the moſt temperate of all other; next to that goats; and next to that aſſes; then ſheep; and laſtly cows milk. *From whence it was* (Bochartus *conjectures, who hath heaped up a great deal on this Subject. L. II.* de Sac. Animal. *Cap.* ult. *Part* 1.) Jupiter *a King in* Crete *about* Abraham's *time (and looked upon afterwards as the greateſt God) is ſaid to have been nouriſhed by a* goat: *that is, by the beſt of nouriſhments.*

Ver. 1. *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.*] Be not ſo confident of thy preſent power, riches or any thing elſe, as to grow preſumptuous, and brag what thou wilt do, or enjoy hereafter: for thou can'ſt not be ſecure of this very day (wherein thou makeſt ſuch large promiſes to thyſelf of the future) which may produce ſomething, for any thing thou knoweſt, that ſhall ſpoil all thy deſigns, and fruſtrate all thy expectations, which thou haſt for to morrow. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth; a ſtranger and not thine own lips.*] Be not ſo blinded with ſelf-love, as to praiſe thyſelf; which is both indecent and imprudent, for others will only the more undervalue thee: but take care to do praiſe-worthy things, which will force commendations even from ſtrangers and foreigners, who cannot be thought too partial to thee; for this will make thee truly honourable.

Ver. 3. *A ſtone is heavy, and the ſand weighty: but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.*] We feel there is heavineſs in a ſtone, and that a bag of ſand is a weighty load; but neither of them is ſo intolerable as the effects of a fool's wrath, which cannot be ſhaken off ſo ſoon as they may be: for he cannot eaſily be appeaſed by us, nor can he moderate himſelf; till his anger hath carried him to the moſt barbarous cruelty. Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 4. *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to ſtand before envy?*] And yet envy is ſtill worſe than this; for though in a fury a man hath no pity, but is tranſported by his violent paſſion beyond all bounds (like an inundation of waters) yet his wrath appearing openly, it may be avoided, and in time it is compoſed and allayed; nay, perhaps he repents of it: but *envy*, (or a *deſire of revenge*) is a lurking evil, which increſes daily without remorſe; and is more exaſperated by time, till it finds ſome means or other to do the miſchief it deſires.

Ver. 5. *Open rebuke is better than ſecret love.*] He that takes an ingenuous liberty to tell others plainly of their Faults, and rebuke them freely, when need requires, to their face, is a better friend, and more valuable, (tho' perhaps he

pleaſe them leſs) than he that hath more of the paſſion of love in his heart, but makes it not known by ſuch good effects. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 6. *Faithful* are *the wounds of a Friend, but the kiſſes of an enemy* are *deceitful.*] Juſt reproofs, though never ſo ſmart and ſevere from one that loves us, ought to be thankfully accepted, becauſe they proceed from his care of us, and fidelity to us; but the moſt tender expreſſions of kindneſs from an enemy, ought to be ſuſpected, to be falſe and treacherous; eſpecially when he heaps them upon us in great abundance, and with ſuch earneſtneſs and ſeeming paſſion, that we had need to pray him to forbear, and pray GOD to preſerve us from being too credulous. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 7. *The full ſoul loatheth an honey-comb; but to the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet.*] As hunger makes men reliſh the moſt diſtaſteful food, when full ſtomachs loath the moſt delightful: ſo poverty hath this advantage of plenty, that it diſpoſes men to be thankful for the ſmalleſt bleſſings, though mixed with care and trouble; when the richer ſort, if they be not very careful, are apt to be unſatisfied with, nay, to nauſeate their moſt delicious enjoyments, upon which they have a long time ſurfeited.

Ver. 8. *As a bird that wandereth from her neſt; ſo is a man that wandereth from his place.*] Men ſeldom change for the better; but as a bird that forſakes its neſt expoſes itſelf to danger, and cannot eaſily ſettle again: ſo he whoſe levity, or diſcontent, makes him raſhly leave his country, or trade, or office, wherein he was well placed, too often undoes himſelf, but rarely mends his condition. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 9. *Ointment and perfume rejoyce the heart: ſo* doth *the ſweetneſs of a man's friend by hearty counſel.*] As balſam and fragrant perfumes marvellouſly refreſh and comfort the natural ſpirits, when they droop and are tired: ſo doth the very preſence of a true hearted Friend, and much more his faithful counſel, rejoyce a man's ſoul; eſpecially when he is at ſuch a loſs, that he knows not how to adviſe himſelf.

Ver. 10. *Thine own friend and thy father's friend forſake not; neither go into thy brother's houſe in the day of thy calamity:* for *better is a neighbour* that is *near, than a brother a far off.*] Forſake not therefore a Friend, whom thou, or thy Father before thee hath tried and found ſincere; but betake thyſelf to him when thou art in diſtreſs, rather than to thy natural Brother or Kinſman, if he be not alſo thy Friend: and above all other, chuſe a Friend near thee, if it be poſſible; for as a man that is cloſely joyned unto us in near affection, is better than one of our neareſt kindred, whoſe heart is not knit to us; ſo a good neighbour near at hand, is better than either Friend or Brother who is ſo far off, that we may periſh before he come to our aſſiſtance.

Ver. 11. *My ſon, be wiſe, and make my heart glad, that I may anſwer him that reproacheth me.*] My dear child if thou haſt any love for him, that was the inſtrument of giving thee a being, let ſuch precepts as theſe make thee wiſe and good: which will both give me the higheſt joy, and furniſh me with an anſwer unto ſuch, as are apt to object the child's miſcarriages, to want of care in his parents.

Ver. 12. *A prudent* man *foreſeeth the evil,* and *hideth himſelf:* but *the ſimple paſs on,* and *are puniſhed.*] He whoſe long experience and obſervation of things, hath made him cautious and circumſpect, foreſeeing a calamity before it comes, withdraws himſelf in good time from the danger, into a place of ſafety: but inconſiderate and credulous perſons are ſo eaſily abuſed by crafty men, that they not only quite overlook the miſchief which even they intend againſt them, and go on ſecurely in their accuſtomed track till it overtake them; but make haſte to fall into it, notwitſtanding any caution that is given them.

Ver. 13. *Take his garment that is ſurety for a ſtranger, and take a pledge of him for a ſtrange woman.*] It is a great weakneſs to truſt him who is ſo raſh, as to be bound for one whoſe ability and honeſty is utterly unknown to him; eſpecially for a woman whoſe way of life makes her credit juſtly ſuſpected: therefore have nothing to do with ſuch an inconſiderate perſon; without the utmoſt ſecurity that he can give thee for the payment of what he owes thee.

Ver. 14. *He that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voice, riſing early in the morning, it ſhall be counted a curſe to him.*] He that ſpends all his time in nothing elſe but proclaiming his praiſes extravagantly, who hath beſtowed great benefits upon him, diſparages rather than commends his Benefactor; in doing ſo much for a baſe flatterer: who magnifying rather his own deſerts than the other's bounty, incurrs hereafter his juſt diſpleaſure. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 15. *A continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.*] He is in an ill caſe, the roof of whoſe houſe is ſo ruinous, that in a very rainy day, when he ſhall be wet if he go abroad,

abroad, cannot be dry at home: and he is no better that hath a ſcolding wife, who torments him herſelf if he ſtay at home; and makes him tormented with the jeers of others, if he go abroad.

Ver. 16. *Whoſoever hideth her, hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand,* which *bewrayeth* itſelf.] For it is altogether as impoſſible for him, to keep the wind from blowing, and from being heard when it blows; or to incloſe a fragrant perfume in his hand, ſo that it ſhall not be ſmelt; as to make her hold her tongue, or to conceal her bawling humour, which ſhe herſelf proclaims. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 17. *Iron ſharpneth iron, ſo a man ſharpneth the countenance of his friend.*] As nothing is more natural, ſo nothing is more powerful than ſociety: for as iron is ſharpned and brightned by iron, ſo one wit whets another, one friend encourages and cheers another; nay, all ſorts of paſſions are ſtirred up, and men are made either good or bad, by mutual converſation. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 18. *Whoſo keepeth the fig-tree, ſhall eat the fruit thereof: ſo he that waiteth on his maſter ſhall be honoured.*] As he that diligently looks after the fig-tree (eſpecially whilſt it is young and tender) and preſerves it from ſuffering by drought, by vermin, or by wild beaſts, *&c.* ſhall at laſt eat of its pleaſant fruit: ſo he that faithfully defends his maſter's perſon or reputation, and takes care his eſtate be not waſted, ſhall in due time be largely rewarded by him for his integrity.

Ver. 19. *As in water face* anſwereth *to face: ſo the heart of man to man.*] The inclinations and deſigns of other men appear as plainly to the mind of thoſe that are wiſe, as their faces appear to themſelves in the water: where, as every man will find ſuch a countenance repreſented to him (whether ſour or ſmiling) as he brings when he looks into it; ſo he ought to expect no other affections from others, but ſuch as he expreſſeth towards them. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 20. *Hell and deſtruction are never full; ſo the eyes of man are never ſatisfied.*] The appetite of man is as unſatiable as his eyes, which ſtill deſire ſome new ſight: and are as far from being filled with all that they have ſeen, as the infernal places with all the ſouls they have received; or the grave with all the bodies it hath devoured.

Ver. 21. *As the ſining-pot for ſilver, and the furnace for gold; ſo is a man to his praiſe.*] As gold and ſilver is tried by putting it into the fire; which diſcovers whether it be pure or adulterate; ſo a man is diſcovered what he is, by trying how he can bear praiſes, commendations and great applauſes; which will preſently ſhew either the virtue or the vanity of his mind. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 22. *Though thou ſhould bray a fool in a mortar, among wheat with a peſtel,* yet *will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him.*] The folly and wickedneſs of ſome men is ſo incurable, that though, unto reproofs and chidings, and threatnings, you ſhould add ſtripes and blows; nay, beat and knock them, like wheat in a mortar; bruiſing their bodies (as we ſpeak) till they are black and blue, they would not grow a whit the wiſer, or the better for it.

Ver. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the ſtate of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.*] Whether thou be a private perſon or a prince, let me adviſe thee to look after thy buſineſs thyſelf; and not to truſt merely to thy ſervants and miniſters: but go ſometimes and take an exact ſurvey of the ſtate of thy affairs; and more particularly make it part of thy care to viſit thy flocks and thy herds, and know in what caſe they are. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 24. *For riches* are *not for ever: and doth the crown* endure *to every generation?*] For as no riches are ſo durable as theſe, which increaſe and multiply continually; ſo the greateſt eſtate, even in theſe, unleſs it be well managed, will in time be brought to nothing: nay, the crown itſelf will not continue to many generations, without due care to preſerve its revenue; of which theſe ought to be thought the beſt and moſt laſting portion.

Ver. 25. *The hay appeareth, and the tender graſs ſheweth it ſelf, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.*] For the maintenance of which the earth brings forth plentifully, without any more pains of thine, than only in the ſpring time to drive the flocks and herds into paſtures; and to look after them, when the earth brings forth graſs and young herbs for their food; and to gather hay in due ſeaſon, which even the mountains afford for their fodder and winter proviſion.

Ver. 26. *The lambs* are *for thy clothing, and the goats* are *the price of thy field.*] And if thou takeſt care to preſerve them, they will preſerve thee: for the ſheep and the lambs will afford thee wooll to make thee clothes; and with the price of thy goats thou may'ſt purchaſe a field, for the ſowing of corn to make thee bread.

Ver. 27. *And* thou ſhalt have *goats milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy houſehold, and* for *the maintenance of thy maidens.*] And both of them, eſpecially the goats, will yield thee milk enough for thy own food, and for the ſuſtenance of all thy family;

family; both men ſervants and maidens: who may hence be provided with all things neceſſary for their livelihood. *See* Arg. [*k*].

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter conſiſts, as the foregoing did, of ſeveral mixed obſervations: ſome belonging to the concerns of private perſons; others to the publick.

[a] *It begins with the difference between a good and a bad Conſcience; which diſcovers itſelf, when there is any danger, of which men are apprehenſive. And in the next verſe, he obſerves the difference between a Nation, when it is bad and when it is good: when its manners are depraved, they fall into confuſion: and when they grow better (for moſt interpreters take the word* Adam *in the latter part of the verſe* collectively, *for the body of the people) then they keep their Government, and live happily. Eſpecially when they have a wiſe and prudent Prince; who is here alſo to be underſtood in oppoſition to* many Princes, *either together or ſucceſſively: by whom a Nation is miſerably haraſſed, when its wickedneſs brings upon it ſuch a puniſhment. So* Melanchon *underſtands*, v. 2. "*The* "*complaints, ſaith he, are very uſual concerning the negligence of Princes, their* "*exactions, oppreſſions, want of care to adminiſter juſtice*, &c. *and the people ſtill* "*accuſe them and their Court: but God* "*accuſes both Princes and people; and for* "*the ſins of the people, he gives them ill* "*Governors; as* Solomon *here teaches,* "*that for the tranſgreſſion of a country*, i. e. "*both of Prince and people*, many are the "Princes thereof: *that is*, none reign "long; *or* many reign together, *oppoſing and thruſting out one another. Now* "*for the cure of this he gives a ſingular* "*Admonition, neceſſary both for Prince and* "*people, which is this: that* a prudent "and wiſe man makes Empire dura"ble. *That is, a wiſe Prince will ſome*"*time depart from his own right to quiet* "*things; and ſuffer ſome inconveniencies* "*to prevent greater: as* Fabius *and* Cicero "*did. And on the other ſide, people are to* "*be adviſed, leſt they draw greater miſchiefs* "*upon themſelves by ſeditious counſels than* "*thoſe which they ſtudy to remedy.*

[b] *And there is none greater he ſeems to tell us in the next verſe* (v. 3.) *than when power comes into the hands of a beggarly fellow: who is void of all humanity, and forgets even what he himſelf was, and all the miſeries of poverty; which he perpetuates upon them who are poor already. So* Maldonate *(and he alone I think) expounds that phraſe* veen lechem, and there is no food, *to ſignify,* before the corn be grown out of the earth: *and by the* ſweeping rain, *underſtands not ſuch rain as beats out the corn when it is in the ear; but which waſhes away the ſeed before it ſpring up. Even ſo, he that ſpoils the poor, takes away from them, after a manner, what they have not: and extirpates the very ſeeds of future riches, which he deprives them of all means of gathering. Upon which ſubject the Lord* Bacon *hath diſcourſed very ingeniouſly in his VIIIth Book of the* Advancement of Learning, *Ch. II. Parab.* 24. "*This Parable,* "*ſaith he, was by the ancients expreſſed* "*and ſhadowed forth under the fable of* "two horſe-leaches; *one full and the o*"*ther hungry. For oppreſſion, coming from* "*the poor and neceſſitous perſon, is far more* "*grievous than that of the rich and the* "*full; becauſe it ſeeks out all tricks for* "*exactions, and leaves no corner unſearch*"*ed where money may be found. This kind* "*of oppreſſion was wont alſo to be reſem*"*bled to* ſponges; *which bring dry ſuck* "*in ſtrongly; but not ſo, being moiſt. And* "*the parable comprehends in it a profitable* "*inſtruction, both to princes and to people.* "*To Princes,* that they commit not the "government of Provinces or Offices "of charge to indigent and indebted "perſons: *And to the people,* that they "ſuffer not their Kings to ſtruggle with "too much want.

But none have gloſſed better upon this place, than an excellent Prelate *of ours, Biſhop* Sanderſon *in his Sermon upon XXIV.* Prov. 10, 11. *where he diſcourſes to this effect.* "*That it is in matter of* power, *as it is* "*in matter of* learning. *They that have* "*but a ſmattering of ſcholarſhip, it is ob*"*ſerved are the forwardeſt to make oſtenta*"*tion of the few ſcraps they have, for* "*fear there ſhould be no notice taken of* "*their learning, if they ſhould not ſhew it* "*when they can; and yet then they do it ſo* "*untowardly, that when they think moſt of* "*all to ſhew their ſcholarſhip, they moſt of* "*all, by ſome groſs miſtake or other, be*"*tray ignorance. Even juſt ſo it is in the* "*caſe of power, when men of baſe ſpirits* "*and condition have gotten a little of* "*it into their hands; who conceive their* "*neighbours will not be ſenſible what good*"*ly men they are, if they do not by ſome* "*act or other, ſhew forth their power to* "*the world: but having minds too nar*"*row to comprehend any brave and gene*"*rous way to do it; they cannot frame to* "*do it by any other means, than by tramp*-

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" *ling upon thoſe that are below them;* " *which they do beyond all reaſon and with-* " *out any mercy.*

Which he illuſtrates very handſomely upon 1 Sam. *XII.* 3. " *If a mean man, ſays he,* " *in any of our Towns or Hamlets, be a little* " *gotten up to overtop moſt of his neigh-* " *bours in wealth; or to be put into ſome* " *ſmall authority, to deal under ſome great* " *men for the diſpoſing his farms or grounds;* " *or have ſomething to ſell to his neceſſi-* " *tous neighbour, who muſt buy upon that* " *day; or have a little money lying by him* " *to furniſh another; who, to ſupply his pre-* " *ſent needs, muſt ſell off ſomewhat of that* " *little he hath, though at an under rate;* " *or the like; it is ſcarce credible (did not* " *every day's experience make proof of it)* " *how ſuch a man will skrew up the poor* " *wretch that falls into his hand,* &c. " conclude hence, all ye that are of " generous births and ſpirits, how un- " worthy that practice would be in " you; *wherein men of the loweſt minds* " *and conditions can, in their proportion,* " *not only equal, but even exceed you:* " which ſhould make you not only " to hate oppreſſion, becauſe it is wick- " ed; but even to ſcorn it, becauſe " it is baſe.

[c] *After this, follow ſeveral bad characters of other men: and among the reſt of him that oppreſſes his brother by* uſury *and* increaſe v. 8. *where theſe two words,* Neſchech, *and* Tarbith, *do not ſeem to ſignify, greater extortion, and more moderate gain. For all uſury is* Neſchech, *as it reſpects the debtor of whom it is taken; and* Tarbith, *in reſpect of the creditor who is the gainer by it; whether it be great or leſs, that the one gives and the other receives. If there be any other difference between theſe two; it either lies in this, that there were ſeveral ſorts of uſury whereby men increaſed their eſtates; or the one ſignifies the advantage men made of their money, and the other the advantage they made of their goods. About which I do not think fit to trouble the Reader any farther: nor to examine whether their opinion be true, who ſay;* the King was to take away their unjuſt gain, and give it to better men. *I have left that undetermined, whether God or man ſhould puniſh the Uſurer, but have expreſſed all that the Law forbids in this caſe, which was to take intereſt (as we ſpeak) of their* Brethren, *eſpecially of their* poor *Brethren; which ſome think are only meant: but I have contented myſelf to ſay, are* principally *meant.*

[d] *And in the next verſe but two* (v. 11.) *he obſerves that ſuch men as grow rich, though it be by fraud or oppreſſion, are apt to have a mighty conceit of their own wiſdom: which underſtanding men, though never ſo poor, ſee thorow, and diſcern to be, at beſt, but craft: and many times to be no more than that, which we call* purſe-pride, *when they have no more wit, but juſt to ſave and hoard up money. Upon which place ſome obſerve that* Solomon *ſecretly intimates* riches to be an impediment to wiſdom; and poverty a great advantage: *becauſe the one is apt to blow men up into a vain opinion of themſelves; and the other to make them humble and modeſt: the former of which is the greateſt Enemy, and the latter the beſt Friend to Wiſdom. Certain it is, that money having ſo large a command, as to be able to purchaſe not only dignity, but great veneration from the multitude; they that have it, are apt to look no farther neither for wiſdom nor virtue: which made a confident to* Cæſar *(as the Lord* Bacon *obſerves) give him this counſel, that if he would reſtore the decayed ſtate of the* Roman *Common-wealth, he muſt by all means take away the eſtimation of wealth: for* theſe, *ſaith he,* and all other evils, together with the reputation of money, ſhall ceaſe; if neither publick offices, nor any other dignities, which commonly are coveted, be expoſed to ſale. *And the truth is, ſaith that Lord* (Advanc. of Learn. *Book I.) as it was rightly ſaid that* bluſhing is the colour of virtue, *though ſometime it come from vice; ſo we may truly affirm that* poverty is the fortune of virtue, *though ſometime it may proceed from miſgovernment and improvidence. And he adds farther, that* the magnificence of Princes and great men, had long ſince turned into barbariſm and rudeneſs; if the poverty of Learning had not kept up civility, and decency of life.

[e] *For bad Princes,* Solomon *ſhews,* v. 12. *bring great contempt and miſery upon a Nation, as bad men* (v. 13, 14.) *bring miſchief upon themſelves. But no Princes are more grievous to their Subjects, than ſuch as are needy, and yet have no goodneſs. So I underſtand, with the LXX. verſe* 15. *where that word we render* raging, *is well tranſlated by the* Vulgar *an* hungry *Bear, as* Bochartus *hath ſhewn.*

[f] *Who alſo ſeems to me, to have expreſſed the ſenſe of the next verſe moſt fully; when he obſerves, that according to the manner of the Hebrew Language, there is ſomething wanting in one part of the verſe, which is to be ſupplied out of the other. As when the Pſalmiſt ſaith in LXXXIV.* Pſal. 11. one day in thy courts, is better than a thouſand; *he means* elſewhere, out of his courts. *And XCI.* Pſal. 7. a thouſand ſhall fall on thy ſide (viz. *the left hand)* and ten thouſand on thy right hand. *In like manner we are to underſtand this verſe, as if he had ſaid.* A Prince that wants underſtanding, and is a great op-preſſor

preſſor, ſhall ſhorten his days: but he that hates covetouſneſs ſhall prolong them. *See Par. I.* de Animal. *S. L. III.* C. 25.

[g] *In the two next verſes I have endeavoured to connect ſeveral Senſes together; as he that examines them will perceive. And in* v. 21. *have taken ſome notice of the Lord* Bacon's *obſervation; that men may be bribed by ſomething elſe beſides money, to pervert juſtice: and more commonly by other reſpects than by that. His words are theſe (B. VIII.* Advanc. of Learn. *Ch. II. Parab.* 23.) Eaſineſs of humour in a Judge, is more pernicious than the corruption of Bribes. For all perſons do not give bribes; but there is hardly any cauſe, wherein ſomewhat may not be found, that may incline the mind of the Judge, if reſpect of perſons lead him. For one man ſhall be reſpected as his Country-man, another as an ill tongu'd man, another as a rich man, another as a favourite, another as commended by a Friend; to conclude, all is full of iniquity where reſpect of perſons bears ſway: and for a very ſlight matter, as it were for a bit of bread, judgment is perverted.

[h] *The reſt of the Chapter contains plain obſervations, concerning ſeveral ſorts of good and bad men: and concludes with the repetition of a remark, he had made before* v. 12. *about the ſtate of publick affairs; which are then in an ill condition, when bad men get into authority. For virtuous men begin then to be ſo ill treated, that thy fly or hide themſelves; to avoid the abuſes which they ſee will be put upon them. This the LXX ſuggeſt, when they tranſlate the firſt clauſe of the verſe, thus;* in places where the impious bear ſway, the righteous ſigh and groan; i. e. *ſome are impriſoned, and ſent into obſcurity, by the unjuſt proſecution of the wicked; and others obſcure themſelves, and groan in ſecret under thoſe oppreſſions, till there be a turn of affairs (which* Solomon *here intimates they may expect in due time) by the fall of thoſe wicked perſons, and the preferment of better: which invites virtuous men to appear again; and by the countenance they then receive, to propagate piety among the people: who are ſo ready to conform themſelves to the example of their Governours, that there is no bleſſing we ſhould pray for ſo earneſtly as this; eſpecially when the days are evil. Then that ſaying of the Son of* Syrach *ſhould be perpetually in every good man's mind, to ſupport and comfort him; when he is conſtrained perhaps to lie hid and conceal himſelf, to avoid trouble and danger,* the power of the earth is in the hand of the LORD, and in due time he will ſet over it one that is profitable, X. Ecclus. 4. *read the foregoing verſes.*

Ver. 1. *THE wicked flee when no man purſueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.*] An evil conſcience makes men timorous and cowardly, like a faint-hearted Soldier who runs away at the appearance of an enemy, and never ſo much as looks back to ſee whether he purſue him: but men of integrity are not eaſily affrighted; but proceed like a young Lion, with an undaunted reſolution, even in hazardous undertakings.

Ver. 2. *For the Tranſgreſſion of a land many* are *the princes thereof: but by a man of underſtanding* and *knowledge the ſtate* thereof *ſhall be prolonged.*] There are many miſchiefs that people draw upon themſelves by their wickedneſs, and this eſpecially; that falling into factions, every one thinks himſelf fit to govern; and, throwing down one ruler after another, they can come to no ſettlement, till they grow better and more conſiderate: and then, ſome truly prudent and pious perſon ariſes; who takes the right courſe to heal theſe breaches, and prolong the Government in peace and tranquillity. *See* Arg. [a].

Ver. 3. *A poor man that oppreſſeth the poor,* is like *a ſweeping rain which leaveth no food.*] But there is none more wicked and intolerable, than a needy fellow, that is got into power; but hath loſt all ſenſe of the miſeries of the poor: whom he ſqueezes and ſpoils, like a violent rain, which inſtead of refreſhing the corn, as gentle ſhowers do, beats it down and lays it ſo flat; that it can never recover; but a famine comes upon the land. *See* Arg. [b].

Ver. 4. *They that forſake the law, praiſe the wicked: but ſuch as keep the law, contend with them.*] From ſuch a man there is none ſo wicked but he ſhall receive incouragement; For they that make not the Law of GOD their rule, but their own luſts, will employ and promote the vileſt perſon, and find ſomething or other to commend him for: but they that reſolutely obſerve GOD's Law, are ſo far from approving ſuch a wicked wretch, that they oppoſe him; and declare, as we ſay, open war againſt him.

Ver. 5. *Evil men underſtand not judgment: but they that ſeek the Lord, underſtand all* things.] For the minds of men, that give up themſelves to wickedneſs, are ſo depraved, that ſome time they do not ſo much as underſtand, and at no time regard the difference between right and wrong; much leſs the difference that GOD doth and will make between them: but

but men piouſly affected underſtand, and conſider all things of this nature ſo exactly, that they are careful not to offend, in the leaſt, againſt their neighbour.

Ver. 6. *Better* is *the poor that walketh in his uprighteouſneſs, than he that is perverſe* in his *ways, though he* be *rich.*] An honeſt upright man, that acts ſincerely in all that he doth, though he be never ſo poor, is far happier, and more uſeful and commendable than a crafty perſon, that knows how to wind and turn himſelf every way; though by his fraud and tricks, he grow never ſo rich and great, *v.* XIX. 1.

Ver. 7. *Whoſo keepeth the law,* is *a wiſe ſon: but he that is a companion of riotous* men, *ſhameth his father.*] He that ſtudies the Law of GOD, and obſerves the rules of ſobriety and temperance and other virtues which it preſcribes, is likely to prove a wiſe Son; in whom his Parents may find comfort: but he that had rather go into merry company, than into the School of the Wiſe, and there ſpend his time and his money in ſenſual pleaſures, is a ſhame, as well as a vexation to them.

Ver. 8. *He that by uſury and unjuſt gain increaſeth his ſubſtance, he ſhall gather it for him that will pity the poor.*] He that increaſes his eſtate by uſury, for the money or goods which he lends to his poor brother, (contrary to the Laws provided in that caſe XXII. *Exod.* 24. XXIII. *Deut.* 19, 20.) ſhall not be able to make his family ſo great as he intended; but thoſe riches ſhall be tranſlated into ſome other hands; which will exerciſe that charity, which he neglected. *See* Arg. [c].

Ver. 9. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer ſhall be abomination.*] He that refuſeth to hearken unto GOD and to obey his Laws, deceives himſelf, if he thinks by his prayers to pleaſe him, and make an amends for his crimes; for GOD will be ſo far from hearkning unto him, that he will abominate ſuch prayers as tend to nothing, but to make GOD a partner with him in his ſins.

Ver. 10. *Whoſo cauſeth the righteous to go aſtray in an evil way, he ſhall fall himſelf into his own pit: but the upright ſhall have good* things *in poſſeſſion.*] He that ſtudies by falſe ſuggeſtions, and deceitful repreſentations, to ſeduce upright men into dangerous practices, ſhall fall himſelf irrecoverably into that very miſchief, which he deſigned for them: while they preſerving their integrity, ſhall remain not only ſafe, but in a flouriſhing condition.

Ver. 11. *The rich man* is *wiſe in his own conceit: but the poor that hath underſtanding ſearcheth him out.*] A man, whoſe labours and cares have ſuch ſucceſs, that he grows very rich, and is courted and complemented by every body; is apt to fanſy himſelf much wiſer than other men: but when a man of mean condition, who applies himſelf more to underſtand the value of things than to get riches, comes to diſcourſe with him; he eaſily diſcovers, and makes it appear, that he is but a fool. *See* Arg. [d].

Ver. 12. *When righteous* men *do rejoice,* there is *great glory: but when the wicked riſe, a man is hidden.*] When the righteous are advanced to places of truſt and authority, there is exceſſive joy among all virtuous men; and the whole Kingdom feels the happy effects of it, in beautiful order, peace, ſecurity and plenty at home; and in the honour and reputation it hath abroad: but when the wicked get up into power, it makes a rueful change being wholly employed in finding reaſons to ruin others; whoſe ſafety then lies in concealing themſelves in their eſtate. *See* v. 28.

Ver. 13. *He that covereth his ſins, ſhall not proſper: but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh* them *ſhall have mercy.*] He that ſtudies to hide or extenuate rather than to leave his ſins, ſhall be ſo far from eſcaping by his impudent denial, that he ſhall make himſelf obnoxious to ſeverer puniſhments: but he that ingenuouſly acknowledges he hath done amiſs; and not only promiſes to do ſo no more, but gives ſome proof of his amendment, ſhall obtain pardon both from GOD and man.

Ver. 14. *Happy* is *the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart, ſhall fall into miſchief.*] From which happineſs if he would not relapſe, let him conſtantly preſerve a pious fear and dread of GOD and of his diſpleaſure in his mind, and be cautious and circumſpect in all his actions: for if he be preſumptuouſly confident and careleſs, and, becauſe GOD is ſo gracious, regard neither his commands nor his threatnings; he will fall back into deeper guilt, and miſery.

Ver. 15. As *a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; ſo is a wicked ruler over the people.*] A lion and a bear are not more dreadful to the weaker beaſts, eſpecially when hunger preſſes them to ſeek a prey, than a needy Prince, who fears not GOD and loves not man, is to the poorer ſort: who have not wherewithal to fill his unſatiable deſires; and yet are the ſureſt to be invaded, becauſe the leaſt able to reſiſt his power. *See* Arg. [e].

Ver.

Ver. 16. *The prince that wanteth underſtanding, is alſo a great oppreſſor: but he that hateth covetouſneſs ſhall prolong his days.*] But it is very great ignorance not only of Religion, but of all things elſe, that makes a Prince grievouſly oppreſs and pillage his people; which makes his reign ſhort, as well as unhappy: when he that, hating ſuch exactions, is kind to his Subjects, prolongs his days in much tranquillity. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 17. *A man that doth violence to the blood of* any *perſon, ſhall flee to the pit, let no man ſtay him.*] He that murthers a man, and preſſed with the weight of his guilt, or purſued by the avenger of blood, flies to ſave himſelf, ſhall never think himſelf ſafe; but lead a reſtleſs life to his very grave: for all men looking upon him as a common enemy ſhall refuſe to ſuccour him: no, though they ſee him falling headlong into a pit, which he is not aware of, they ſhall not ſtop him, but let him periſh.

Ver. 18. *Whoſo walketh uprightly ſhall be ſaved: but* he that is *perverſe* in his *ways ſhall fall at once.*] There is no ſuch way to be ſafe, as to be honeſt and ſincere in all a man's words and actions; for he that indeavours to preſerve himſelf by fraud and deceit, tho' he can wind, and turn, and hath ſeveral ſhifts he thinks to ſave himſelf by, yet in one or other of them he ſhall periſh: for the time will come, when he will blindly chuſe the wrong courſe; and commonly when he begins to fall, he ſinks utterly and cannot poſſibly recover himſelf.

Ver. 19. *He that tilleth his land ſhall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain* perſons, *ſhall have poverty enough.*] He that is a good husband in the management of his eſtate, ſhall have the ſatisfaction of providence ſufficiently, if not plentifully, for himſelf and his family: but he that is careleſs, and follows the courſes of looſe and wicked companions, can reap no other fruit of his negligence, but the moſt miſerable want and beggary.

Ver. 20. *A faithful man ſhall abound with bleſſings: but he that maketh haſte to be rich, ſhall not be innocent.* He that is true to his word, and juſt in all his dealings, ſhall have abundance of bleſſings from GOD, and be well ſpoken of by men: but he whoſe eager deſires make him heap up wealth, by right or by wrong, brings ſuch guilt upon himſelf, as makes him execrable unto both.

Ver. 21. *To have reſpect of perſons,* is *not good: for a piece of bread* that *man will tranſgreſs.*] It is a wicked thing in a Judge to incline to conſider the quality of the perſon, and not the merits of the cauſe that is brought before him: for though perhaps at the firſt he could not be corrupted under a great ſum of money, yet having accuſtomed himſelf to it, he will at laſt ſell his Sentence at the loweſt rates; nay, be moved by the ſmalleſt conſiderations to forſake the rules, which ought to guide him. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 22. *He that haſteth to be rich,* hath *an evil eye, and conſidereth not that poverty ſhall come upon him.*] An envious, covetous wretch, that cannot look upon what another hath without grudging, is puſhed on, by his impatient deſires, to get riches, without making any diſtinction between good and evil: never conſidering, in that diſturbance of mind wherein he lives, that all may be gone in a moment; and he then ſtand in need of the mercy of thoſe, whom he would not pity.

Ver. 23. *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.*] He that rebukes a man for his evil courſes may diſpleaſe him, nay anger him at the firſt: but when he conſiders that he could have no other end in it but his good, he will have a greater kindneſs for ſuch a man, than for one that humours him in every thing; and with flattering words ſooths him up in thoſe faults, which he ought to take the freedom to reprehend.

Ver. 24. *Whoſo robbeth his father or his mother, and ſaith,* It is *no tranſgreſſion; the ſame* is *the companion of a deſtroyer.*] He that lays hands upon all that he can rap and rend from his father or mother, and thinks it no ſin, or no great one (pretending they keep him too ſhort, and have no need of it themſelves, or do not uſe it, *&c.*) not only keeps the company of ſpend-thrifts; but is wicked enough to be a high-way man, and murther others to feed his own luxury.

Ver. 25. *He that is of a proud heart, ſtireth up ſtrife: but he that putteth his truſt in the Lord, ſhall be made fat.*] A man of a proud and inſolent ſpirit, of ambitious and vaſt deſires, is never quiet; but as he lives in perpetual quarrels, ſo hath no ſatisfaction in what he enjoys; nay, many times waſtes it all in ſuits and contentions: but he who, confiding in the good Providence of the Almighty, hath an humble and contented mind, lives peaceably with others, and comfortably within himſelf; nay thrives many times and abounds with plenty of all good things.

Ver. 26. *He that truſteth in his own heart, is a fool: but whoſo walketh wiſely, he ſhall be delivered.*] He that relies wholly upon his own judgment is like to miſ-

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miſcarry; becauſe he follows the conduct of a fool: but he that, diſtruſting himſelf, takes good advice and follows it, eſcapes many miſchiefs, into which the other raſhly runs; and is delivered out of many dangers, in which the other periſhes.

Ver. 27. *He, that giveth unto the poor, ſhall not lack: but he, that hideth his eyes, ſhall have many a curſe.*] He, that relieves, thoſe that are in want, ſhall be ſo far from wanting himſelf, that he ſhall thereby procure GOD's bleſſing to increaſe his eſtate: but he that regards not the miſeries of others, nor is willing ſo much as to know them, for fear of having his compaſſion moved towards them, ſhall draw upon himſelf the curſe of GOD as well as men; and fall into many and grievous misfortunes.

Ver. 28. *When the wicked riſe, men hide themſelves: but when they periſh, the righteous increaſe.*] When wicked men are advanced unto power and authority, they favouring ſuch only as are like to themſelves it makes good men ſcarce; who are forced to withdraw, and hide themſelves from their tyranny; but when they periſh (as they ſhall at laſt) and good men come in their place, then the righteous openly ſhew themſelves; and the number of them increaſe by their example, and by the incouragement they enjoy under righteous Governours. *See* Arg. [*b*].

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter concludes the Collection of Proverbs, made by the* men of Hezekiah; *and contains more advices proper to a Prince (as he was) than any of the reſt: but uſhers them in, with a general admonition, how dangerous it is not to profit by reproofs or corrections (ſuch as he and his people had by the hand of* Senacerib) *which when they work upon mens ſpirits there is ſome hope of them: but when they become refractory, inflexible and obſtinately reject them, they are near to a final deſtruction. This wicked temper of mind, he expreſſes, by hardning* the neck: *which is a Metaphor, as* Bochartus *truly obſerves (L. III.* de Sacris Animal. *C. 41. P. 2.) taken from* Oxen *who being put forward draw back and withdraw their necks and ſhoulders from the yoke: and ſometimes are ſo headſtrong and ſtiff-necked, that they cannot be brought to ſubmit to it: unto which the Scriptures often alludes, both in the Old Teſtament and the new: for inſtance XXXII.* Exod. 9. *VII.* Act. 51. *And hither belong thoſe expreſſions XLVIII.* Iſa. 4. *where he ſaith his people had an* iron ſinew, *&c. and that in V.* Jer. 5. *where he ſaith they* had broken the yoke and burſt the bands.

[b] *Then follows a tacit Admonition unto Princes, to be good, by deſcribing the happineſs which a Nation then enjoys: which they had noted twice before in the foregoing Chapter,* v. 12. *and* 28. *but thought it ſo conſiderable and ſo needful, that they inſert it here again; and the latter part of it once more,* v. 16. *Being a famous obſervation of his father* David, *XII.* Pſal. 9. *where he takes notice,* how the wicked flouriſh, and go about confidently into every place, nay, take the liberty to do as they liſt, when men of no account are exalted to power: who take no care to oppoſe growing wickedneſs, and to keep every man within the bounds of his duty.

[c] *And after an Admonition* (v. 3.) *that the ſtudy of wiſdom is the only preſervative againſt the luſts of uncleanneſs; which, in the preface to this book as it is obſerved, deſtroys abundance of young men, and their eſtates alſo (for* Luſt is very blind and very prodigal) *the next obſervation* (v. 4.) *is concerning Kings again: where* iſh Terumoth, *which we tranſlate* a man that receiveth gifts, *is in the Hebrew phraſe* a man of oblations. *For ſo the word* Terumoth *always ſignifies, throughout the whole Bible,* the heave offerings *which were offered to God: which would make one think that* iſh Terumoth *(a man of* heave offerings) *ſignifies here,* a Prince that is ſacrilegious, *and robs the Church of its proper goods: or, if we will not take it in that ſtrict ſence, it denotes one that will ſuffer himſelf to be pacified by gifts, and bribed to wink at the moſt enormous crimes, which he ought to have ſeverely puniſhed: or, that is ſo unjuſt, as to find fault, perhaps with the moſt innocent perſons, on purpoſe that they may appeaſe him, offering him a part of their eſtate to ſave all the reſt: one or other of theſe is the moſt literal expoſition of the words. But I have contented myſelf with the LXX. (who render it* παράνομος) *to uſe only general expreſſions in the Paraphraſe which include all theſe; and whatſoever elſe that is contrary to the duty of his office.* Rabbi Solomon *doth not differ much from the ſenſe of the LXX. when he tranſlates it,* a proud man, *who heaves and lifts up himſelf in his own thoughts, imagining he is above all laws, and not bound to obſerve them.*

[d] *In the next verſe* (v. 5.) *I have not wholly neglected the ſenſe of the LXX. who re-*

fer the laſt clauſe to the flatterer himſelf: who cannot eſcape the hatred of thoſe, whom he hath ruin'd by his pernicious praiſes, or baſe compliances, with all their humours, &c. *which is more fully expreſſed in the following Sentence,* v. 6. *where I have interpreted one part of the verſe by the other.*

[e] *And then ſeems to follow again, a double admonition to Princes, or thoſe that govern under them.* Firſt, *not through lazineſs or contempt to refuſe to examine a poor man's complaint, and do him right,* v. 7. Secondly, *not through prophaneneſs, pride, or careleſneſs to ſcorn admonition; eſpecially any warning that is given of danger,* &c. *v.* 8. *For when he ſays* the righteous conſiders the cauſe of the poor, *he ſeems to mean a* righteous Prince, *or judge (and ſo I have explained it in the Paraphraſe) for who elſe is to conſider of the* din *(as is in the* Hebrew) *the cauſe of the poor which is to be judged? None, but they, and the Advocates who are to plead it: all which perſons are obliged in conſcience, to ſearch into the truth of things; not to be ſparing of their pains (though matters be intricate, though the labour be like to be long, though they ſhall get nothing by it) to find out the bottom of a buſineſs: which he that refuſes to do, nay, perhaps rejects the complaint of the poor, or beats them off with bigg words; or out of the hardneſs of his heart, or the love of eaſe, or fear of great men, or any other reſpect will not give them audience, or not conſider and redreſs their grievance;* Solomon *pronounces him a* wicked, *an* impious *perſon; and accordingly God will proceed againſt him.*

[f] *Such men indeed may ſcorn theſe threatnings, nay, laugh at them: but thereby they will endanger the bringing all things into confuſion; as* Solomon *obſerves in the ſucceeding words,* v. 8. *where* men of ſcorn *(as it is in the* Hebrew) *ſignify ſuch as mock at Religion, and at all things that are ſerious: whom the* LXX. *call* ἄνομοι, lawleſs, peſtilent *men; that regard neither God nor man but only their own wicked humour; which brings the Kingdom or place where they live into the greateſt danger. Which we expreſs by the word* inſnare *and other Tranſlations by words of the import: which I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe, but ſhall not mention here, becauſe I would leave room to inſert the moſt admirable diſcourſe of the Lord* Bacon *upon this verſe.* "*It may ſeem ſtrange, ſaith* "*he, (B. VIII.* Advance of Learn. *Chap.* "*II. Part* 12.) *that in the deſcription of* "*men, made and framed, as it were, by* "*nature to the ruin and deſtruction of a* "*State,* Solomon *hath choſen the charac-* "*ter not of a* proud *and* inſolent *man,* "*not of a* tyranical *and* cruel, *not of* "*a* raſh *and* violent, *not of an* impious "*and* lewd, *not of an* unjuſt *and* op-"preſſive, *not of a* ſeditious *and* tur-"bulent, *not of an* incontinent *and* vo-"luptuous, *no nor of a* fooliſh *and* un-"able *perſon: but of a* SCORNER. *But* "*this is a judgment moſt worthy the wiſ-* "*dom of that great King, who beſt knew* "*the cauſes of the preſervation or ſubver-* "*ſion of a State. For there is not com-* "*monly the like plague unto Kingdoms and* "*Commonwealths, as when Counſellors, or* "*Senators, and ſuch as ſit at the helm of* "*government, are by nature* ſcorners. *For* "firſt, *ſuch perſons, that they may win* "*the reputation of undaunted Stateſmen,* "*do ever extenuate the greatneſs of dan-* "*gers: and inſult over thoſe who give them* "*their juſt weight, as timorous and faint-* "*hearted people.* Secondly, *they ſcoff at* "*all mature delays, and meditated debatings* "*of matters by conſultations and deliberati-* "*on, as a thing too much taſting of an* "*oratory vein, and full of tediouſneſs; but* "*nothing conducing to the ſum and iſſue of* "*buſineſs. As for Fame* (thirdly) *at which* "*a Prince's Counſels ſhould eſpecially level,* "*they contemn it as the* ſpittle of the "vulgar, *and a thing that will quickly* "*be blown over. The power and authori-* "*ty of Laws* (fourthly) *they regard not at* "*all; but look upon them as Cobwebs, that* "*ought not to ſtop matters of conſequence.* "Fifthly, *counſels, and precautions, fore-* "*ſeeing of events afar off, they reject as* "*mere dreams and melancholy apprehenſi-* "*ons.* Sixthly, *men truly prudent, and well* "*ſeen in affairs, of great reſolution and* "*counſel, they defame with gibes and jeſts.* "*In a word, they do at once overturn all* "*all the foundations of civil Government:* "*which is the more to be attended, be-* "*cauſe they ſecretly undermine it, and do* "*not aſſault it by open force. And it is* "*a practice which is not yet ſo ſuſpected* "*among men as it deſerves.*

[g] *The latter end of the next verſe* (v. 9.) *ſome refer to the* fool, *others to the* wiſe man. *They that refer to the fool underſtood it* two *ways, much to the ſame purpoſe. Some thus,* the fool will alway be angry or deride, ſo that the wiſe man cannot put in a word. *Others thus,* the wiſe man ſhall be either irritated, or derided by the fool perpetually. *As much as to ſay he ſhall get nothing, if he contend with a fool, but either to be derided or provoked to anger by him. This I have taken ſome notice of, in my Paraphraſe: but the other, being the moſt common opinion, that he ſpeaks of the way of a wiſe man's dealing with a fool, I have principally regarded. And the Lord* Bacon *hath made this very pertinent reflection upon it (in the forenamed Book and place Pa-*

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rab. 3.) *which it will be profitable to ſet down here.* " *It is accounted a wiſe rule,* " not to contend with our betters: " *but it is a no leſs uſeful admonition, which* " Solomon *here gives us,* not to con- " tend with a worthleſs perſon; *whom* " *we cannot meddle withal, but upon diſ-* " *advantygeous terms.* For to overcome, " is no victory; but to be conquered " a foul diſgrace. *And it is all one, in* " *the management of his contention, whe-* " *ther we deal ſometime* in a jeſting *way* " *with him, and ſometime in a way of* " diſdain and ſcorn. *For which way ſo* " *ever we turn, we ſhall come off with the* " *loſs of our credit, and not be able hand-* " *ſomely to diſengage ourſelves. But the* " *worſt of all is, when the perſon with* " *whom we contend hath* ſomething of the " fool *in him, (as* Solomon *ſpeaks.) That* " *is, if he be both* witneſs *and* wilful: " *have ſome* heart *but no* brain.

[h] *The* tenth *verſe I have expounded of a* Magiſtrate, *that hath the courage to make inquiſition after, and proſecute notorious offenders: and, in the latter part of it, have put two ſenſes together. As I have done alſo in the next* (v. 11.) *where the word* Ruach, Spirit, *being differently interpreted, hath produced ſeveral expoſitions. For ſome take it to ſignify* anger; *others to ſignify* words, *or the* ſenſe of the mind. *They that take it for* anger, *expound it thus,* A fool ſhews all his anger immediately, but a wiſe man keeps it in, till he hath a fitting opportunity, to expreſs it moſt to purpoſe. *If we underſtand it of* words, *the ſenſe is;* a fool blurts out every thing that comes in his head, but a wiſe man ſpeaks only as much as is neceſſary. *If it ſignify the* ſenſe of the mind, *then this is the meaning* a fool utters all that he knows; but a wiſe man conceals many things. *But the great perſon before named (in the ſame Chapter* Parab. 15.) *thinks none of theſe hit the mark.* " *For this Parable, ſaith he,* " *corrects principally, not the* futility of " vain men, *who utter eaſily as well what* " *ought to be kept ſecret, as what may be* " *ſpoken; nor* the bold liberty *of ſuch as* " *without diſcretion and judgment, fly upon* " *all men and upon all matters; nor* talka- " tiveneſs, *which troubles others even to* " *a ſurfeit; but another vice more cloſe and* " *retired,* viz. *that government of diſcourſe* " *which of all other is not prudent and* " *politick.* And that is, when a man " ſo orders his diſcourſe, in private con- " ferences; as whatſoever is in his mind " which he conceives any way per- " tinent to his purpoſe, out it comes " at once, and as it were in one birth, " and in a continued ſpeech. *This is* " *that which doth much prejudice buſineſs.* " *For* firſt *a ſpeech broken off by interlocu-* " *cutions, and inſtilled by parts, penetrates* " *deeper than that which is continued: be-* " *cauſe that in a continued diſcourſe the* " *weight of things is not preciſely and di-* " *ſtinctly taken; nor by ſome convenient pau-* " *ſes ſuffered to fix: but one reaſon drives* " *out another, before it be thoroughly ſettled* " *in the mind of the hearer.* Secondly, " *there is no man maſter of ſuch powerful* " *and happy eloquence, as to be able, at the* " *very firſt daſh, as we ſpeak, to ſtrike* " *him* dumb and altogether ſpeechleſs, " *with whom he diſcourſes: but he will* " *have ſomething to anſwer, and perhaps* " *to object on the other ſide. And then* " *it falls out that thoſe things, which ſhould* " *have been reſerved for replication and* " *refutation, being diſcloſed already and* " *taſted before-hand by this unadviſed an-* " *ticipation, quite loſe their ſtrength and* " *their grace.* Thirdly, *if a man do not* " *not pour out all he hath to ſay at once,* " *but deliver himſelf by parcels; now one* " *thing, and anon caſting in another: he ſhall* " *perceive by the looks and the anſwer of* " *him, with whom he diſcourſes, how every* " *particular paſſage affects him, and what* " *acceptance they find with him: ſo as what* " *is yet remaining to be ſpoken, he may* " *with the greater caution, either ſuppreſs,* " *or ſelect what is to his purpoſe. Thus that great perſon: who herein hath followed the LXX. who expreſs the ſenſe, rather than tranſlate the words, in this manner;* a man void of underſtanding brings out his whole mind: but a wiſe man diſpenſes it part by part.

[i] *The like obſervation he makes upon the next verſe* (v. 12.) *where by* lyes *or* words of falſhood *(as the Hebrew hath it) the LXX. truly underſtand* λόγον ἄδικον an unjuſt report, *that hurts our neighbour by calumnies, or falſe accuſations (as the word commonly ſignifies in Scripture, particularly* Pſal. LII.) *unto which if a Ruler lend his ear, he will never want lewd Informers or rather Slanderers in his Court to work upon that inclination.* Melanethon *hath obſerved upon this verſe, that the* love of lyes *(as he tranſlates it) comprehends a great many vices: according as there are divers ſorts of lyes: which are all repugnant to that eminent Virtue of* Truth, *in which a Prince ought to excel, viz.* vanity *or* perfidiouſneſs, breach of promiſes, calumnies, ſuſpicions, ſophiſtry; *which defends bad cauſes by colourable pretences to pleaſe great men; and perſuades the Prince by plauſible arguments, that he is tied to no rules: unto any of which if a Prince be inclined; his Miniſters will not fail to make him break his word perpetually; to abuſe him with falſe ſtories, to infuſe into his mind unjuſt ſuſpicions; and to find colour for any thing, though*

never

never ſo wicked: of all which he gives examples.

But none hath opened this Parable comparably to the Lord Bacon, *in the place before-mentioned (Parab. 13.)* " *Where he takes it for* " *an eaſy credulous temper, in a Prince to* " *believe Detractors and Sycophants without* " *examination, From whence proceeds ſuch* " *a peſtilential breath, as infects and cor-* " *rupts all his Servants. For ſome of them* " *feel out the* fears *and* jealouſies *of the* " *Prince, and increaſe them by fictitious tales.* " *others, awake and ſtir up the furies of* " envy; *eſpecially againſt all thoſe that are* " *beſt deſerving in the State. Others ſeek* " *to waſh away their own guilt, and the* " *ſtain of a foul Conſcience, by defaming* " *better men. Others promote the ſuits of* " *their friends, and their preferments, by* " *traducing and debaſing the merit of their* " *competitors. Others compaſs fabulous re-* " *preſentations of their enemies, as if they* " *were upon a ſtage; and innumerable ſuch* " *like. And theſe are the arts of ſuch of* " *the Princes Servants, as are of a more* " *wicked diſpoſition. As for thoſe, who are* " *by nature better inclined, and by educa-* " *tion more civilized, when they perceive* " *their innocence to be no ſafe ſanctuary* " *(their Prince not knowing how to diſ-* " *guſh between truth and falſhood) they put* " *off the probity of their manners, and ac-* " *commodate themſelves alſo to the air of* " *the Court, and are carried about therewith* " *in a ſervile manner. For (as* Tacitus " *ſaith of* Claudius) there is no " ſafety with that Prince, into whoſe " mind all things are conveyed, as it " were by infuſion and direction from " others. *And* Comines *ſaith very well,* " It is better to be ſervant to a Prince " whoſe ſuſpicions have no end, than " to one whoſe credulity hath no mea- " ſure.

After this, there follows in the next verſe but one, another Admonition to Princes, v. 14. *And then a double Admonition to private Parents, to take care of the good education* " *of their Children; as the beſt way to make a Kingdom happy, and to prevent the increaſe of wickedneſs. About which he interpoſes an Obſervation between theſe two: in the explanation of all which verſes. I have had ſome reſpect to the LXX. without any injury to our Tranſlation.*

[k] *And ſo I have done in the next,* v. 18. *where by* viſion *or rather* prophecy *they underſtood* ἐξηγητὴς, *an expounder of the Laws of God to the people; which was the office of the* Prophets: *who had a great ſtroke alſo in the Government (as* Melanchon *obſerves) and by their counſels, when they were followed, made the Kingdom flouriſhing. As* Eliſhah *for about 70 years governed the counſels of their Kings in the greateſt calamities; particularly in the ſiege of* Samaria: *After whoſe death the Kingdom indured not much above an hundred years, agitated by perpetual ſeditions. Thus* Eſaiah, *by his counſels of* Jeremiah *a good part of the people were ſaved. From ſuch examples, ſaith he, we may gather, that when* prophecy *ceaſed, the people were ſcattered (ſo he tranſlates the word* Para) *becauſe for want of wholſome Counſellors there follow in Empires, ſtrifes of ambition, and ſeditions, which all tend to utter ruine: yet the* ſecond *part of this ſentence, ſaith he, admoniſhes us, that a remnant ſhould be ſafe in their diſperſions,* viz. *ſuch as kept the Divine Doctrine. For want of which God takes away mens inſtructors, when they are not obedient to wholſome precepts. So the LXX. tranſlate this verſe (minding the ſenſe rather than the words)* there is no expounder of the Law, to a wicked lawleſs Nation, *&c. God* ſtrips *them even of their teachers; as ſome tranſlate the word* Para, *periſh: which hath various ſignifications, moſt of which I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe; becauſe they all agree well enough to this Place.*

[l] *There is an expoſition of the next words,* v. 19. *which would be very natural, if the Wiſe man ſpoke only of the commands of Miniſters to their Servants; which they pretend ſometime not to hear, that they may do as they are bidden. But he ſpeaks of their not amending the faults, of which they have been already told: which is not the quality of all* ſervants; *and therefore I have ſaid a* ſlave. *Or elſe we muſt interpret it, as the LXX. do of* οἰκέτης σκληρὸς, a ſtubborn, obſtinate ſervant; *whoſe heart is hardened againſt all words that can be ſpoken to him, good or bad.*

[m] *But I muſt make no more gloſſes, for fear of prolonging this Preface too much beyond its juſt bounds. And therefore I ſhall conclude it, with the Lord* Bacon's *obſervation upon* v. 21. *(where the LXX. have expreſſed but a little part of the ſenſe)* " *that* " *both* Princes *and private* Maſters, *ſhould* " *keep a* mean *in the diſpenſation of their* " *grace and favour towards* ſervants: " *which* mean *is* threefold. *Firſt, that* " *Servants* be promoted by ſteps (*or de-* " *grees*) not by leaps. *Secondly, that* they " be now and then accuſtomed to re- " pulſes. *Thirdly, (which* Machiavel *will* " *adviſes) that they* have ever in their " ſight before them, ſomething where- " unto they may farther aſpire. *For* " *unleſs theſe courſes be taken, in raiſing of* " *Servants, Princes ſhall inſtead of thankful* " *acknowledgments, and dutiful obſervance* " *be repaied with nothing but diſdain and* " *contumacy. For from ſudden promotion,* " *ariſes* inſolence; *from conſtant attain-* " *ment of their deſire, proceeds* impatience

" of

" of being denied; *and there being no-*
" *thing remaining that they can farther*
" *wiſh*, alacrity *and* induſtry *will ceaſe.*

Ver. 1. HE *that being often reproved, hardeneth* his *neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.*] He that having received frequent reproofs from good men, and perhaps corrections from GOD, will not yield in the leaſt, but abſolutely refuſe to be guided by them, and ſubmit unto them; is in danger to fall, and that on a ſudden, into utter and irreparable ruin. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *When the righteous are in authority the people rejoyce: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.*] When juſt and merciful Governours make vertuous men grow numerous, (XXVIII. 28.) a Kingdom is happy: but when an unjuſt man rules, the wicked get into places of truſt; and make the people miſerable groan under their oppreſſions. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *Whoſo loveth wiſdom, rejoyceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots, ſpendeth* his *ſubſtance.*] A young man whoſe love of wiſdom and vertue, preſerves his body as pure as his mind, and his eſtate as intire as both, gives the greateſt joy to his Father: As on the contrary, nothing can be a greater grief to him, than to ſee his Son ſo ſottiſh, as to maintain a company of harlots; whoſe covetouſneſs being as unſatiable as their luſt, devoureth all that he hath. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *The king by judgment ſtabliſheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.*] A King that adminiſters Juſtice exactly to all his Subjects, reſtores his Kingdom to a good eſtate, though it hath been before in great diſorder: But he who, having no reſpect to equity and right, takes the moſt illegal courſes to inrich himſelf, ſubverts it utterly; though it be never ſo well ſettled. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 5. *A man that flattereth his neighbour ſpreadeth a net for his feet.*] He that ſooths up his neighbour, by commending all that he doth, though never ſo directly againſt his intereſt, is ſo far from being his friend, as he imagines, that he is a traitor to him; and leads him unawares into ſuch dangers, that when he finds himſelf perplexed in them, he will treat that flatterer as his greateſt enemy. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 6. *In the tranſgreſſion of an evil man* there is *a ſnare: but the righteous doth ſing and rejoyce.*] A naughty man hath an heavy heart at laſt, when he finds himſelf undone by thoſe very arts, whereby he thought to have ruin'd others: but pious men are always cheerful, nay, full of joy; both to think that they are in ſafe and ſecure ways, and to ſee the evil doer caught in his own wickedneſs.

Ver. 7. *The righteous conſidereth the cauſe of the poor:* but *the wicked regardeth not to know* it.] A righteous man, when he is in authority, not only readily receives, and patiently weighs, the complaints of the pooreſt perſon; but is at the pains to ſtudy his cauſe, that he may fully underſtand it and do him right, though he thereby incur hatred to himſelf from the adverſe party: but a wicked man will not attend unto it, or not uſe due care to be well inſtructed in it. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 8. *Scornful men bring a city into a ſnare: but wiſe* men *turn away wrath.*] There are no greater fools than Scorners, who by laughing at all things ſerious, whether ſacred or civil, put a Kingdom into a combuſtion, when it is diſpoſed to be quiet; nay turn things topſy-turvy, and indanger its utter ruin, unleſs good and cautious men prevent it; who by their piety, turn away the divine vengeance; and by their prudence and other vertues, divert the fury of men, which thoſe ſcorners have raiſed. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 9. If *a wiſe man contendeth with a fooliſh man, whether he rage or laugh,* there is *no reſt.*] Let a man be never ſo wiſe it is to no purpoſe for him to diſpute or to enter into any conteſt with an obſtinate fool: for which way ſoever he deal with him, whether angrily, or pleaſantly, there will be no end of the controverſy; but the fool will ſtill have the laſt word; nay, it is well if he do not either reſtleſly rage, or laugh one to ſcorn *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 10. *The blood-thirſty hate the upright: but the juſt ſeek his ſoul.*] Men enormouſly wicked who ſtick not to kill thoſe that oppoſe their deſires, above all others hate and would deſtroy an upright Magiſtrate; whoſe integrity makes him courageouſly endeavour to bring them to condign puniſhment: but ſuch a perſon, all vertuous men love the more heartily, and labour to defend and preſerve from their violence; or to revenge his death, if he ſhould periſh by them. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 11. *A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wiſe* man *keepeth it in till afterwards.*] A fool is ſo inconſiderately tranſported by his paſſion, or conceit of himſelf, that when he comes to treat of any buſineſs he can put no ſtop to his diſcourſe; but runs on, till he hath poured out all that

he thinks upon that Subject: but a wise man represses the heat and forwardness of his Spirit, that he may pause and take time, to declare his mind, not altogether, but by parcels. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 12. *If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants* are *wicked.*] A Prince who hearkens to the false suggestions of those, that tell him he may do what he pleases; or who easily believes, without any examination, all the stories and accusations that are brought him against others; fills his whole Court with so many wicked men, that it is hard to find an honest Minister or Officer among them. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 13. *The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the Lord lightneth both their eyes.*] The world is made up of several sorts of men: of poor, for instance, who are fain to borrow, and of rich who lend them money, and perhaps oppress them: but these would all agree well enough, when they meet together, if they would but consider, that there is one LORD who makes the Sun to shine equally on all; and who intends all should live happily, though in an unequal condition. *See* XXII. 2.

Ver. 14. *The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.*] A King that administers justice equally to all his Subjects, and cannot be moved by the Power or interest of the greatest persons to deny it to the meanest; but faithfully and sincerely sets himself to help the poor to their right, or to defend them from violence and wrong; takes the surest course to settle himself in the affections of his people, and continue his Kingdom for many generations.

Ver. 15. *The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left* to himself, *bringeth his mother to shame.*] The way to make a Child wise and virtuous, is not only to instruct him in his duty, but to check him when he is in fault; and that not merely by reproof, but by the sharp descipline of the rod, when the other will do no good: for if he be left to his own will, or rather to wander after his own inclinations without such restraints, he will prove, in all likelihood, a disgrace to his mother, by whose indulgence he was spoiled; nay, fly perhaps in her face, and openly reproach her. X. 1.

Ver. 16. *When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.*] When the wicked grow numerous, by growing great *v.* 2. men take the greater license to trasgress; and wickedness increases by having authority on its side: but let not the righteous hereby be discouraged; for the wickeder men are, the shorter is their reign; and they that preserve their vertue shall have the pleasure to behold their downfall.

Ver. 17. *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest: yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*] It may seem most for thy ease to let thy Child alone, without giving him correction or reproof; but let me advise thee to put thy self to this trouble, to save thy self a greater (*viz.* many anxious and restless thoughts, which his ill doing will raise in thee) or rather to give thy self the highest delight, when by thy care of his education, he proves a great ornament unto thee.

Ver. 18. *Where* there is *no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy* is *he.*] Where there are none to instruct the people, and expound the will of God unto them, they first grow idle and careless, and run into all licentiousness; till, growing refractory and ungovernable, they be abandoned by God to destruction: but when they are not only well taught, but also strictly observe the Laws of God, they remain in a prosperous happy condition. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 19. *A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand, he will not answer.*] A Slave, and he that is of a servile nature, is not to be amended by reason and perswasions; no, nor by reproofs, or threats: for, tho' he hear, and understand too, what you say, yet he will not obey, till he be forc'd unto it by blows. *See* Arg. [*l*].

Ver. 20. *Seest thou a man* that is *hasty in his words?* there is *more hope of a fool than of him.*] Observe it when you will, you shall commonly find that he who is forward to speak to a business, before his betters, or before he understand it, or hath considered it, is so conceited of himself, that a man wholly ignorant, may sooner be rightly informed, than he who is so well perswaded of his own sufficiency.

Ver. 21. *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become* his *son at the length.*] It is so hard for a man of base condition, to bear a sudden preferment handsomly, that it is dangerous to express too much kindness to a Servant at the very first; by feeding him delicately, cloathing him finely, or indulging him too much ease, liberty and familiarity: for this is the way to make him sawcy, if not contumacious; nay, to domineer and take upon him, as if he were a Son, and perhaps indeavour to disinherit the Heir of the Family. *See* Arg. [*m*].

Ver. 22. *An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*] A man prone to anger is very troublesome,

ſome, and unpeaceable, being apt to quarrel about trifles: and, as he offends very often, ſo, if he let it proceed to rage and fury, he falls into abundance of ſins; both in word and deed, againſt God, and againſt his neighbour.

Ver. 23. *A man's pride ſhall bring him low: but honour ſhall uphold the humble in ſpirit.*] Proud and contumelious behaviour inſtead of procuring men reſpect, throws them into the contempt and hatred of all; and at laſt into deſtruction but he whoſe meek and lowly mind makes him kind and obliging, ſhall be highly eſteemed; and the eſteem he hath ſhall be his ſupport, when others fall to ruin.

Ver. 24. *Whoſo is partner with a thief, hateth his own ſoul: he heareth curſing, and bewrayeth* it *not.*] He that partakes with a thief, by harbouring, him when he is purſued, or by receiving ſtol'n goods, *&c.* hath the ſame guilt upon him with the thief himſelf; and as he hath put his own life in danger to ſave the thief's, ſo this will engage him to run his ſoul into greater danger, to ſave his life: for being adjured to diſcover what he knows, he will go near to forſwear himſelf, for fear of being hanged.

Ver. 25. *The fear of man bringeth a ſnare; but whoſo putteth his truſt in the Lord, ſhall be ſafe.*] As all inordinate fear bereaves a man of counſel and power to help himſelf; ſo he that ſtands in too great fear of what men can do unto him, will be inſnared in many ſins, and perils alſo, to avoid their diſpleaſure: but he that confides in the LORD, hath his wits always about him, and, being raiſed above ſuch low conſiderations, preſerves his integrity; and that, by GOD's good providence over him, will preſerve him in ſafety.

Ver. 26. *Many ſeek the ruler's favour, but every man's judgment* cometh *from the Lord.*] There are multitudes of men, who are ambitious to be known to their Prince, and obtain his favour for honour and preferment; but few remember that there is a greater LORD than he, the Sovereign of all the world, whoſe grace and favour ſhould be principally ſought: for He determines and orders what every man's portion ſhall be; and will both judge of men's deſerts better than any earthly King can do; and deal with them according as they behave themſelves, in that condition wherein they are.

Ver. 27 *An unjuſt man* is *an abomination to the juſt: and* he that is *upright in the way,* is *abomination to the wicked.*] There is ſuch a perfect antipathy between vertue and vice, that all truly good men extremely abominate him that doth miſchief in the world, though he be never ſo great and powerful: as, on the contrary, the evil doer hath every man that behaves himſelf uprightly, though never ſo uſeful, in utter abhorrence and deteſtation.

The End of the Third Part of the Book of PROVERBS.

THE

The End of the Third Part of the Book of

PROVERBS.

THE FOURTH PART OF THE BOOK of *PROVERBS.*

CHAP. XXX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter contains a new Collection of pithy Sayings; which ſome fancy to be* Solomon's: *and therefore tranſlate the two firſt words, thus;* the words of the Collector, *or* gatherer. *But why* Solomon *ſhould call himſelf by this name, and alſo, inſtead of the* Son of David, *ſtile himſelf the* Son of Jake, *ſeems to me unaccountable. And therefore it is moſt reaſonable to follow our Tranſlation (unto which the wiſeſt of thoſe that adhere to the* Vulgar, *are forced to conſent, as moſt literal) and to look upon this Chapter as a Fragment of ſome wiſe Sentences, delivered by one whoſe name was* Agur, *and his Father's name* Jake: *unleſs we will conceive that this Son of* Jake (*whoſoever he was*) *had gotten the name of* Collector; *becauſe, though he was a very wiſe man, yet he compoſed nothing himſelf: but only* gathered *out of other wiſe mens works, ſuch Inſtructions as he thought moſt profitable, and compriſed, in a few words, a great deal of ſenſe.*

[b] *Which conjecture if it be admitted, nothing can better explain his diſclaiming the title of a* Wiſe man (v. 2.) *which he would not aſſume to himſelf, becauſe he was only a* Collector *from other Authors, and did not pretend to have diſcovered or invented any thing himſelf.*

But take it how we will, ſome of his Obſervations are here annexed to the Proverbs of Solomon; *after the manner of other Writings of this nature. In which (as* Melanchon *notes) the greater part of a Book belonging to one Author, ſome notable ſpeeches of others have been inſerted: as ſome of the* Sibyllin *Verſes, they ſay, were into the Poem of* Phocyllides.

[c] *And theſe words of* Agur *are called* Maſſa, *which we tranſlate* Prophecy, *either to denote the weightineſs of the Sentences; or that they were culled and ſelected out of ſome work of his, then remaining in their records, as fit (in the judgment of the* men of Hezekiah, *who perhaps extracted them) to accompany the* Proverbs of Solomon. *And they ſeem to me to be Anſwers to ſeveral Queſtions propounded to him by his Scholars,* Ithiel (*who was the principal*) *and* Ucal; *who came to him, as if he had been an Oracle, to be reſolved in ſome hard doubts: asking him in the firſt place, juſt as they did* Apollo *of old (as* Aben Ezra *conjectures)* Who was the Wiſeſt man? *To which he replies,* v. 2. He that is ſenſible of his own Ignorance: *much like the ſaying of* Socrates, This only I know, that I know nothing: *and of* Pythagoras *who alſo refuſed the name of* Wiſe; *which made much for the reputation of his wiſdom.*

[d] *Upon this ſubject* Agur *inlarges*, v. 3, 4. *wiſhing his Scholars, eſpecially* Ithiel *(who I ſuppoſe ask'd the queſtion in the name of the reſt) to be ſenſible how imperfect all human knowledge is; by conſidering how little or nothing we know of the works of God, which none can underſtand (though they be perpetually before our eyes) but he alone that made them. And therefore adviſes him to make it his principal ſtudy, to underſtand what belonged to his own duty (which is the beſt part of knowledge)* v. 5. *and herein alſo to be content with what God hath reveal'd; and not pretend to be wiſer than He hath made us*, v. 6.

[e] *After which, he gives Anſwers, as I take it, unto other Queſtions, which* Ithiel *propounded to him. And firſt about* Prayer. *For* Agur *having repreſſed their huſie humour of inquiry into all manner of things, had raiſed, we may ſuppoſe, ſome devotion in his Scholars hearts; which made them deſire to be directed in it. And he gives them moſt wiſe advice*, v. 7, 8. *to be very cautious what they prayed for; juſt as in* Plato (Alcibiad. 2.) *we find* Socrates *giving* Alcibiades *inſtructions about this, as a principal part of virtue; in the practice of which, he tells him, there had need to be the greateſt care, leſt we imprudently ask thoſe things that are not good for us. But he could not give* Alcibiades *ſuch directions about this matter, as* Agur *here gives* Ithiel *and the reſt of his Scholars. Whom he informs, that the true knowledge of God is the chiefeſt good; and therefore to be deſired in the firſt place, above all other goods: and then (according to our Saviour's rule, in after-times) having firſt ſought the things that belong to Religion, he directs them to beg of God moderate deſires of all earthly things; believing that we are ſafer in a mediocrity, or middle eſtate, than either in fulneſs or in want. To which purpoſe* Melanchon *and others have gathered together many ſayings out of other Writers. But none have given ſuch reaſons for this choice of a middle ſtate, as this wiſe man*, v. 9.

[f] *After which, he ſeems to anſwer a queſtion, which* Ithiel *propounded about* moral virtue: *which having been largely treated of by* Solomon, *he only gives him one caution againſt hard-heartedneſs to Slaves and Servants*; v. 10. *of which the Hebrew Nation were generally very guilty, and thereby unmeet for that favour which they begg'd of God in their Prayers; which ought to have diſpoſed them to be favourable unto others.*

[g] *And then he gives the character of* four *ſorts of men, who are execrable unto God; and therefore ought to be avoided by all thoſe that would be good*, v. 11, 12, 13, 14. *which I muſt paſs by without any farther account of them, but what I have given in the Paraphraſe: becauſe the fifteenth verſe hath much difficulty in it, and therefore requires ſome time to be ſpent in opening it.* Bochartus *thinks to ſolve ſome of the difficulty by giving a new ſignification of the word* Aluka. *But all Interpreters, in a manner, taking it for that thick worm in wateriſh places, which we call an* horſe-leech, *I do not think fit to forſake our Tranſlation: nor to refer the beginning of the verſe to that immediately foregoing (as ſome do, in this manner;* detractors can no more leave off evil ſpeaking, than the horſe-leech leave off ſucking, *&c.) but rather to thoſe words immediately following in this ſame verſe, which, notwithſtanding, I take to have ſome connexion with all the* four *foregoing, as I have expreſſed it in the Paraphraſe. For it ſeems to me to be an Anſwer to ſome ſuch Queſtion as this (which the Diſciples had propounded to their Maſter* Agur, *after the manner of ænigmatical diſcourſes or riddles)* what is moſt unſatiable? *which he chuſes to give an account of in this place; the better to repreſent the nature of thoſe wicked men he had ſpoken of before: eſpecially of the* two laſt; *the* proud; *and the* tyrannical *or* extortioner; *whoſe deſires are a gulf, that can never be filled.*

And at the firſt he ſeems to have thought but of two *things*, viz. *the* grave *and the* barren womb; *which might be called the* daughters *of the* horſe-leech, *becauſe they are ſo perfectly of the like nature, in regard of their unſatiableneſs. But he preſently adds* another; *nay, a* fourth *came into his mind, as no leſs greedy:* viz. *the* thirſty earth *(which in thoſe hot Countries ſucks up all the rain as faſt as it falls, though never ſo much) and the* fire, *which devours all the fewel that is laid upon it. And this he expreſſes after the manner of the* Hebrews: *who intending to mention* four *things or more, ſeparate them at firſt, and begin with a leſſer number; and proceed then to all that they deſigned. There are many examples of it in* I. Amos 3, 5, 9, &c. *and here in this Book of* Proverbs, *Vl.* 16. *and below in this Chapter*, v. 18, 21, &c. *Indeed there is no example like this, where the ſentence begins with* two, *and then ſays* three, *and then* four: *but that might be uſual of which we have no exact example; and therefore I do not look upon this as a ſufficient objection, againſt this way of explaining this verſe. Which the LXX. hath taken in the* Roman *Edition; which runs thus,* the horſe-leech hath three beloved daughters, and theſe three are never ſatisfied: and there is a fourth that ſaith not, it ſufficeth.

There are thoſe who compare certain vices, with theſe four *unſatiable things, and not ineptly:* the deſire of revenge, *to the grave;* libidinous deſires, *to the barren*

womb;

womb; covetouſneſs *(or rather* drunkenneſs*) to the thirſty earth*; *and* ambition *to the devouring Fire. And it is eaſy to ſhew, how fitly all theſe are reſembled to the* horſe-leech: *it being the vulgar ſaying, that* harlots *(for inſtance)* are the horſe-leeches of young men, *ſucking all their money from them, and exhauſting their bodies too. And the Servant in* Plautus, *when he was about to rob the Cheſts of the two old men, ſays,* jam ego me vortam in hirudinem, *&c. now I will turn my ſelf into a horſe-leech, and ſuck out their very blood.*

But I forbear ſuch things, becauſe there are others, more neceſſary to be added for the underſtanding the reſt of the Chapter.

[h] *And that which next follows,* v. 17. *is a reflection upon the* firſt *generation of wicked men (mentioned,* v. 11.*) who ſinned againſt the firſt Commandment of the ſecond Table (as we ſpeak) and for their rebellion againſt their Parents were adjudged to death by the Law of* Moſes, *XXI.* Exod. 15, 17. *XX.* Lev. 9. *XXI.* Deut. 18. *And to make them more deteſtable, their carcaſes perhaps were thrown into ſome lothſome places, called* the valley of carcaſes, *or* dead bodies *(XXXI.* Jer. 40.*) and* the valley of crows *(as* Bochartus *conjectures) or* ravens; *whom the Wiſe man here ſpeaks of. And beſides this, they who abuſed their Parents, being of a villainous nature, were likely to turn Rogues; and to commit Robberies, Murthers, Treaſons, or ſuch like horrid crimes: which would bring them to the gallows (as we ſpeak) or ſome ſuch infamous death. The* Jews *indeed might not ſuffer the body of one that was hang'd, after he had been put to death, to remain upon the gibbet, beyond the evening of that day, wherein he was executed. But they were not forbidden to let him lie unburied, in ſome polluted place, when he was taken down: And in ſome caſes, we find, they did let dead Bodies hang a long time, as we read* 2 Sam. *XXI. And therefore* Paulus Fagius *(upon XX.* Exod. 12.*) expounds theſe words of* Agur *after this manner*; diſobedient children ſhall come to an ignominious death, and end their days by an halter, or other puniſhment; and ſo become crows meat. *But there is no neceſſity of this explication. For we may conceive ſuch a wicked perſon, to be* drowned *by the juſt judgment of God upon him; and his body to lie floating on the water; or to be caſt on ſhore, where the* ravens *(who frequent the waters) come and pick out his eyes; at which they are obſerv'd to fly, ſooner than any other part. He might* periſh alſo in other Countries, *where the infamous puniſhment of the gibbet was in uſe*; or *be* ſlain in battle; *and left there to be a prey to beaſts and birds. Among which the* Raven *is the rather mentioned, ſome think, becauſe the young ones are ſo impious (as* Voſſius *ſpeaks, L. III.* de Idol. *Cap.* 85.*) as to fall upon the old ones and kill them, when they are hungry, (which is affirmed by* Ælian *and others) and therefore more fitly employed to pick out the eyes of undutiful Children. But I look upon this as having more of fancy, than ſolidity in it: for others, for the quite contrary reaſon, make the* Eagles *here named, becauſe they are a bird full of piety; as hath been obſerved out of* Aben Ezra, *by our learned Dr.* Caſtell. *whoſe diſcourſe in his* Speech (in Schol. Theol. *p.* 31.) *I ſhall here ſet down for the explication of one word in this verſe; wherein he differs from all others: which is* נתר. *This word the* Hebrews *interpret* doctrina, *and underſtand the verſe thus,* the eye that deſpiſeth the doctrine or the leſſon of his mother, *&c. But there is no known root in their language from whence to derive this ſignification of it: and therefore that* Doctor, *out of the neighbouring languages, tranſlates it rather* ſenium, old Age: *which is moſt agreeable to the ſenſe of the place. For that which is deſpiſed by the* eye *is ſome corporal defect (as* crookedneſs, wrinkles, ſhaking of the head, *&c. and ſuch like things which attend old age) not any thing belonging to the mind. And beſides, ſaith he, it better agrees with what follows of the* Eagles young ones *picking out ſuch an eye: for they are obſerved to bear a regard to their ancients, and to have a kind of piety in them.*

[i] *In the next words,* (v. 18, 19, 20.) *he reſolves another riddle, they put to him; which was this:* what things are moſt obſcure and unaccountable, though ordinary and common? *of which I have given the beſt explication I could in the Paraphraſe; but cannot farther explain here, without making this Preface (which muſt neceſſarily be longer than ordinary, unleſs I ſhould give no account of ſeveral things in the following verſes which require explication) a great deal too much exceed the proportion which belongs to it.*

[k] *Next to theſe* four inſcrutable *things, he ſubjoyns* four *more, which are* very grievous, *or rather* intolerable, *becauſe of their great indignity,* v. 21, 22, 23. *the* two firſt *belong to men, and the diſturbance of the Commonwealth; the* two laſt *to women, and the diſturbance of private Families. And there are reaſons peculiar to each:* ex. gr. *a* Slave *is intolerable when he gets the Scepter into his hand (as they have done ſometimes) partly becauſe ſuch perſons, being ill-bred, generally have baſe principles; and are accuſtomed to vile things; and grow inſolent by their good fortune: partly, becauſe they are full of fears and ſuſpicions, eſpecially that they are deſpiſed and contemned; and therefore believing they are not loved, they*

will

will be feared, and care not what cruelties they exerciſe to keep men under. Part of which the Jews *object to themſelves in* Schebet Judah; *where they bring in a Philoſopher laying this to their charge, that they affecting dominion in the City of* Toledo, *proceeded to ſuch boldneſs and ſaucineſs, that they would openly ſtrike Chriſtians: which fulfilled, ſaith he, that of* Solomon, XXX. 22.

[l] *The like might be ſaid of the other* three; *but I ſhall only obſerve concerning the laſt, that there being another way of explaining it, beſides that which is moſt obvious, I have not omitted it: becauſe the LXX. go that way, who thus render it,* When a ſervant maid caſts her miſtreſs out of doors. *And there is a* third *way, which I have not mentioned, becauſe it is not ſo agreeable to the words; when the miſtreſs is not expelled, but the* maid alſo is taken to wife and preferred in the husband's love: *as* N. de Lyra *takes it: examples of which we have in hiſtory, that have proved very fatal to families. But this Preface, as I ſaid, would be too long if I ſhould name them; therefore I paſs to the next.*

[m] *Which ſeems to be an Anſwer to this Queſtion,* Quid eſt magnum in minimo? What is great in little? *or rather in* the leaſt? *v.* 24, 25, 26, &c. *where he teaches us ſeveral things:* firſt *not to admire merely bodily bulk, ſtrength, or beauty; but rather wiſdom, diligence and ſagacity to underſtand and purſue our own intereſt:* ſecondly, *to admire the wiſdom and power of God in the ſmalleſt things: and* thirdly (*as* Melanæthon *adds*) *to reflect upon our own degenerate ſtate, who neglect our own greateſt good; nay, mind not ſelf-preſervation, but rather deſtroy our ſelves by vice and wickedneſs; and* laſtly, *not to refuſe admonition from the brutes. Among which, ſaith he, the* Ants *teach us induſtry, and forecaſt; the* Rabbits *not to attempt any thing above our ſtrength; the* Locuſts, *to preſerve ſociety by induſtry, and not to break it by ſedition and diſturbance of the publick order; and the* Spider, *to endeavour to excel in ſome art or other. All of them teach us not to rely merely on ſtrength, but to uſe counſel and prudence.*

The firſt *and* ſecond *of which reflections I find in St.* Chryſoſtom, *who diſcourſes admirably (Hom. XII.* ad pop. Antioch. *p.* 139) *of the wonderfulneſs of the divine artifice, which in ſo ſmall a body, as that of the* Ant, *hath contrived ſuch a perpetual deſire of labour. To which if we attend, we cannot but receive this inſtruction,* μὴ καλακαλακίζειν, μηδὲ φεύγειν ἱδρῶτα καὶ πόνους not to affect ſoftneſs and delicacy, nor fly from ſweat and labours. *And when the Wiſe man ſends us, ſaith he, to learn of theſe little Creatures, he does juſt as we are wont to do in Families; when the greater and the better ſort have offended in any thing, we endeavour to ſhame them, by pointing to the little Children, ſaying,* βλέπε τὸ μικρότερον σου, πῶς ἐστι σπουδαῖον καὶ διηγερμένον behold, one that is a great deal leſs than thou, how towardly, how attentive and ready he is, to do as he is bidden.

[n] *But that word which we tranſlate* Conies, v. 26. (*which are not ſo ſmall a Creature, as* Solomon *here ſpeaks of, nor make their holes in Rocks*) Bochartus *hath evidently proved ſignifies a* Mouſe *in thoſe Countries (whoſe hinder legs are longer than the fore legs) called by the* Arabians *in their language* Aljarbuo; *whoſe craft I have briefly expreſſed in the Paraphraſe.*

[o] *In what is ſaid of the* Locuſts *alſo,* v. 27. *I have followed him: who obſerves, that to* go forth, *is a Scripture phraſe for* making war. *In which the General was wont to divide the prey among the Soldiers, after a Victory: but the* Locuſts, *having no ſettled conſtant Commander, divide among themſelves. Yet I have not neglected our Tranſlation.*

[p] *Which in the 28th verſe hath forſaken the antient Interpreters, who take* Semamith, *not for a* Spider, *but for a ſmall ſort of* Lizzard; *from its ſpots called* ſtellio; *which is accounted by all Authors a very crafty Creature: and to which the characters here given by* Solomon *do moſt properly belong. As the ſame* Bochartus *hath ſhewn at large L.* 4. C. 7. de Sacr. Anim. *Part* 1. *But if any have a liſt to underſtand hereby, ſome ſort of* Spider, *they may read* Cœlius Secundus *his little Book called* Araneus: *In which he repreſents the wonderful wiſdom of God, in the ſtructure of this ſmall Creature: together with its admirable agility, and cunning; both in* weaving *its* webs *and* nets; *and in* hunting *for its prey (particularly for young* Lizzards) *and in* preſerving *it ſelf; and its foreſenſe of dangers, and of opportunities to catch its prey: For inſtance, againſt rainy weather; when other little Creatures grow dull in their motion and in their ſight. In ſhort, he obſerves, that as there is nothing, in appearance ſo mean, ſo abject, ſo ſmall, in which the Creatour of all is not to be adored, and whoſe uſefulneſs is not very great; ſo there are* five *things which are admirable in that ſort of* Spider, *which he deſcribes:* the exhauſted matter which it ſpins out of ſo ſmall a body; the wiſdom of its contrivances; ſtrength in fighting; knowledge of the future; and uſefulneſs for medicine.

[pp] *And from all theſe* four, *ſome have noted, that an abridgment may be made of all that is neceſſary for the converſation of a Kingdom in good eſtate: where* firſt, *care muſt be taken for proviſion of food, which*

we learn from the Piſmire; *then for ſecure and commodious dwelling, which we learn from the* ſecond *ſort of Creature; and then that there be concord and agreement among domeſticks and citizens, which we learn from the* third; *and* laſtly, *that labour, induſtry and ingenuous arts be incouraged and advanced, which we learn from the* fourth.

[q] *After the Conſideration of theſe* four *little Creatures, of ſmall ſtrength and contemptible aſpect, he places* four *other which are great, ſtately and undaunted,* v. 29, 30, &c. *In which there are two conſiderable difficulties; one about that word in* v. 31. *which we tranſlate a* Grey-hound *(the vulgar a* Cock; *though* Maldonate *ingeniouſly conjectures the true reading in S.* Hierom *was* Gallicus canis, *which afterward came to be corrupted into* Gallus) *but I take rather for a* Horſe (*as our* Margin *hath it) being a far braver, and more ſtately Creature than either of thoſe; eſpecially when he pranſes, and is managed by a rider.*

The other is about the laſt words *of the ſame verſe: which are the character he gives of a* King *(who perhaps is immediately placed after the* He-goat; *becauſe that Creature in Scripture is an Emblem of Majeſty VIII.* Dan. 5. 21. *XIV.* Iſa. 9. *L.* Jer. 8, &c.) Alkúm immò, *which* Bochartus *tranſlates,* againſt whom none of his Subjects ought to riſe. *For though many do; yet it is ſo contrary to their duty, and ſo dangerous, that he therefore calls him* Alkum, againſt whom none ariſes. *So* Pallas *was called by the* Phœnicians, Ela Alkuma, *the Goddeſs againſt whom none made* inſurrection. *And the City in* Bœotia *that was ſacred to her (ſhe being reputed to be born there) was called* Alalcomenas: *for though it was ſmall and built in a plain, yet it always remained untouched and inviolated, becauſe out of reverence to the Goddeſs,* πάντες ἀπείχοντο πάσης βίας, *(as* Strabo *ſpeaks)* all men abſtained from all force and violence to it. *Thus he diſcourſes in his* Epiſt. quæ Reſp. ad tres Queſt. p. 43. *And I find he had ſaid it before in his* Phaleg. *Second Part, L.* 1. *Cap.* 16. *where he tranſlates* melec. Alcum, Rex invictus, *an invincible King.*

But there is another conjecture, of a very learned man of our own, Mr. Pocock, *(Not. ad Gregor. Abul. Pharai. p.* 203.) *which is ſo patt, that I could not omit it in my Paraphraſe. For, according to the* Arabick *uſe of the word* Alkum (*out of which language both* Rabbins *and* Chriſtians *take the liberty to expound the* Hebrew *words of the Bible, when they are ſingular*) *the ſenſe is ſtill more pregnant, and ſounds thus:* A King with whom his people is, *or* whom his people follow. *For as when there is ſuch a happy agreement between King and people, there is nothing more comely; ſo then he appears with the greateſt and moſt awful Majeſty, and ſtrikes terror into all his enemies.*

[r] *The two* laſt *verſes, if we take them ſevered from the foregoing, are an advice how to be happy: which the whole Chapter ſhews in effect, is, to endeavour to be innocent. But becauſe no man can be ſo wiſe, as never to do a fooliſh thing; he ſeems, in concluſion, to tell what is next to that,* viz. *when we have miſcarried any way, not to juſtify it; but to appeaſe thoſe whom we have offended, by ſilence; taking ſhame to ourſelves, and not defending what we have done amiſs, much leſs making complaints of others,* &c. *For (as I have expreſſed it in the Paraphraſe,* v. *laſt) by inſiſting upon our innocence, or charging others, or exaggerating faults, very great miſchiefs may inſue.*

But theſe two verſes *may be connected with that which precedes; (though I have not been bold to do it, becauſe Interpreters go the other way) and* v. 32. *may be an advice to* Subjects *if they have offended their Prince any way, and been ſo fooliſh as to oppoſe him, not to perſiſt in their error; much leſs to defend it, and clamour upon the Government,* &c. *but ſit down in ſilence, bewailing the guilt, and imploring a pardon. And then* v. 33. *may be looked upon as Advice to* Princes, *not to oppreſs their Subjects; and thereby provoke them to rebel againſt them.*

The Vulgar *Latin ſeems to refer both to* Princes: *for thus runs the ſenſe of* v. 32. *according to that Tranſlation (which I cannot indeed reconcile well with the* Hebrew.) It ſometimes happens, that he who is advanced on high (*to a throne ſuppoſe*) appears to be a fool: who if he had underſtood (viz. *his danger, or his folly, or what had been beſt for him*) would have put his hand upon his mouth: *that is, never have deſired that dignity which perhaps he earneſtly ſought. And, though I know not how to juſtify this Tranſlation, it agrees well with what follows which may well be applied unto* Princes) *that* it is great folly to ſtrain things too far. *Either the* Laws, *which if extended to the utmoſt rigor, will, by ſuch hard conſtruction, become the bane of humane ſociety; or their* taxes *and exactions beyond what the people can bear. For by ſqueezing them too much, moſt dangerous ſeditions and rebellions have happened under excellent Princes.*

And thus Melanchon *underſtands the beginning of this verſe* (v. 33.) *that Empires and Governments ought to be moderate; according to two excellent ſayings of* Plato *and* Solon; *which he alledges: and then concludes that* anger *alſo ought to be expreſſed (according to the admonition in the laſt words) leſt publick diſcords ariſe, which draw after them vaſt ruins; and oft-times ariſe from*

light cauſes; which ought to have been mollified and cured by ſome moderation, and not exaſperated into a flame.

Ver. 1. THE *words of Agur the ſon of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man ſpake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal.*] Here now follow ſome memorable Sayings of *Agur*, who was the Son of *Jaeche*; out of whoſe Works theſe weighty Sentences were collected, which he uttered like a prophetical Teacher to *Ithiel*, one of his moſt eminent Scholars, and to *Ucal*, another of them, but eſpecially to the former. *See* Arg. [*a*] [*c*].

Ver. 2. *Surely I* am *more bruti ſh than* any *man, and have not the underſtanding of a man.*] Who admiring his Wiſdom, and deſiring to be reſolved in many difficulties, *Agur* modeſtly and humbly ſaid, Do not call me wiſe: for I am far from that acuteneſs, which is natural to him who excels in wiſdom, that I am ſtupid, in compariſon with ſuch a perſon; nay, I cannot arrogate to myſelf the underſtanding of a common man. *See* Arg. [*b*] [*c*].

Ver. 3. *I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.*] And as for improvements, which are made by the help of knowing perſons I have not had the advantages of many other men: for I was never brought up in the Schools of the Prophets, where I might have learnt ſome wiſdom; much leſs have I received the knowledge of ſuch ſacred myſteries, as thou inquireſt after; the moſt I can pretend unto, is only to know what belongs to a pious life. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 4. *Who hath aſcended up into heaven, or deſcended? who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his ſon's name, if thou can'ſt tell?*] But had I a greater reach, or been better bred, it would have been impoſſible for me, to give an account of the works of GOD; much leſs of GOD himſelf. For where is he among all the Wiſe men, that ever went up into heaven and came down again, to tell us the order, and the motion of the Stars; and all the reſt that is done there? Nay, who is it, that can ſo much as give us the leaſt account of the Wind, but GOD alone? who hath it perfectly in his power, to make it ceaſe, and blow again, as he pleaſeth. And, to come lower yet, Who but He hath tyed up the Waves of the Sea, that they ſhould not exceed their bounds? or who hath fixed the Earth (on which thou dwelleſt, and therefore art better acquainted with all) within ſuch limits, as it never breaks? By what name is he called, that can explain theſe things? or, if thou knoweſt, tell me the name of his Son, or of his Family; that, if he be dead, we may enquire of them.

Ver. 5. *Every word of God* is *pure: he* is *a ſhield unto them that put their truſt in him.*] The moſt that any man can do for thy ſatisfaction, is this; to ſend thee to the Book of GOD, and bid thee be content with what He hath there revealed of Himſelf, and of his Will; which in every part of it is ſo ſincere, and free from all mixture of deceit, that thou may'ſt ſafely rely upon it; and take his word, that He will protect and defend all thoſe, who, in obedience to his commands, truſt Him for what He hath promiſed.

Ver. 6. *Add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*] Let this ſuffice thee; and do not pretend to greater acquaintance with his Will, than really thou haſt; by adding any thing of thy own to GOD's word, and vouching it for his: which may bring thee into great danger of the ſevereſt puniſhments from Him; for being guilty of the worſt of forgeries, in counterfeiting divine inſpiration.

Ver. 7. *Two* things *have I required of thee, deny me* them *not before I die.*] And in Anſwer to the Queſtion about Prayer (what things thou ſhouldſt ask of GOD) I have not much to ſay neither; for I would not have thee multiply words, but ſay, as I am wont to do: I humbly beg only two things of Thee, O GOD; which I moſt earneſtly beſeech Thee I may not want, as long as I ſtay in this world.

Ver. 8. *Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me:*] The *firſt* is for my mind; that I may be perfectly ſecured from being deceived myſelf by falſe opinions, eſpecially concerning Thee and Religion; and from being any ways guilty of deceiving other men: and then for the ſupply of my bodily neceſſities, I deſire Thou wouldſt neither give me ſcarcity, nor ſuperfluity; but if I may chuſe, a middle between both: making me ſuch a competent allowance as may be ſufficient to maintain me decently, in that ſtate and condition of life, wherein Thou haſt placed me. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 9. *Leſt I be full, and deny* thee, *and ſay, Who is the* LORD? *or leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the name of my God in* vain.] For I am ſenſible how great danger there is, either in having abundance of wealth, which may tempt me to be ſo profane and irreligious, as not only to forget the donor of all good things, but atheiſtically to contemn thy worſhip and ſervice; nay, inſolently profeſs, that I know

no ſuch thing as the LORD, nor have any thing to do with Him: or in a beggarly condition, which may preſs me, firſt to be injurious unto others for my own relief; and then to run into the fearful crime of perjury, to purge my ſelf from the charge of theft. XXII. *Exod.* 8, 11.

Ver. 10. *Accuſe not a ſervant unto his maſter leſt he curſe thee, and thou be found guilty.*] As for rules of behaviour towards others, they are generally well known; and therefore I only admoniſh thee to avoid one thing (to which our Nation is too prone) that is, not to abuſe any poor Slave, whoſe condition is wretched enough; and therefore, for inſtance, rather excuſe than aggravate his fault to his Maſter, who perhaps is too rigorous: and be ſure never to load him with unjuſt accuſations, leſt, being wronged by thee, and not knowing how to right himſelf, he appeal to the Lord and pray Him to puniſh thee; and thou, being found guilty, feel the heavy effects of his vengeance. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 11. There is *a generation* that *curſeth their father, and doth not bleſs their mother.*] And now, to anſwer your inquiry, *what company you ſhould keep?* There are four ſorts of men, I would have you ſet a mark upon and cautiouſly ſhun. *Firſt*, they that are foully ungrateful to them from whom they have received many benefits: for ſuch a ſort of men there is, who have no ſenſe of obligations, no, not to their Parents, to whom they have the greateſt; but rail upon their Father, nay, wiſh him dead; and cannot ſpeak a good word of their Mother.

Ver. 12. There is *a generation* that are *pure in their own Eyes, and* yet *is not waſhed from their filthineſs.*] Next to theſe, are a ſort of hypocrites; who have a great opinion of their own purity, and would be thought by others very virtuous: but hide the greateſt filthineſs, both in their minds and lives (which either they do not ſee, or will not take care to purge away) under this outward garb of holineſs.

Ver. 13. There is *a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up.*] There is a *third* ſort, whoſe pride and arrogance is ſo lofty, that it appears in their very countenance; and makes them ſuperciliouſly overlook all other men, as if they were not worthy of the leaſt reſpect from them.

Ver. 14. There is *a generation whoſe teeth* are as *ſwords, and their jaw-teeth* as *knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from* among *men.*] But the *fourth* and laſt ſort is moſt miſchievous, whoſe ravenous cruelty hath no example; unleſs you conceive a Lion or Wolf, that hath teeth, both ſmall and great, as ſharp as ſwords or knives, coming with open mouth to devour every Creature, that is weaker than themſelves: ſuch is the ſavage oppreſſion of tyrants, extortioners, calumniators, *&c.* who have no mercy upon the poor and needy; but make their condition (which moves compaſſion in other men) ſo inſufferable, that they are weary of living any longer in the world.

Ver. 15. *The horſe-leach hath two daughters,* crying, *Give, give. There are three* things that *are never ſatisfied,* yea, *four* things *ſay not,* It is *enough:*] And here I will ſatiſfie one of your other Queſtions, *What Creature is moſt unſatiable?* I anſwer, the *Horſe-leech*; which ſucks the blood of other Creatures, till it burſt: as thoſe wicked men do the livelihood of the poor, till they ruin themſelves. And in this perpetual craving more and more, without any end; there are *two* things ſo like the Horſe-leech, that they may be called her Daughters: nay, there are *three* that are never ſatisfied; or rather *four* whoſe deſires cannot be filled. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 16. *The grave and the barren womb, the earth* that *is not filled with water, and the fire* that *ſaith not,* It is *enough.*] They are theſe; *Death*, or the *Grave*; which having conſumed ſo many paſt Generations, will as greedily ſwallow up and conſume all that are yet to come: the *barren* Womb; which is wont to be deſirous of Children beyond meaſure: *the Earth*, which drinks up all the rain that falls upon it, and ſtill thirſts for more: and the *Fire*, which devours all the fuel that is thrown into it, and never ceaſes to burn, as long as there is any thing to feed it.

Ver. 17. *The eye* that *mocketh at* his *father, and deſpiſeth to obey* his *mother, the ravens of the valley ſhall pick it out, and the young eagles ſhall eat it.*] I will not end this, till I have pronounced the doom of the *firſt* ſort of wicked men, now mentioned (*v.* 11.) who are ſo ungrateful to their Parents, as not only to diſobey their commands, but to ſcorn, nay, and deride their perſons; and mock at the infirmities of their old-age: whoſe villanies ſhall bring them to an infamous end, and expoſe their dead bodies for a prey to the Ravens (which frequent the Brooks, that run in the Vallies) and to the young Eagles; who ſhall pick out thoſe eyes, in which their ſcorn and deriſion of their Parents was wont to appear. *See* Arg. [*h*].

Ver. 18. *There be three* things *which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not:*] To your next Queſtion, my Anſwer is; that there are three things, whoſe motions

motions are beyond my reach: nay, a fourth, which is the moſt unaccountable of all the reſt. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 19. *The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a ſerpent upon a rock, the way of a ſhip in the midſt of the ſea, and the way of a man with a maid.*] *Firſt*, the wonderful ſwiftneſs of an Eagle's flight into the air, quite out of our ſight (XXIII. 5.) *ſecondly*, the manner of a Serpent's ſpeedy creeping, without any feet, to the top of a ſlippery rock: *thirdly*, the way that a Ship makes in the Sea, though it ſeem ſometime to ſink to the bottom of the water, and again to mount up into the air: But above all, the ſlipperineſs of youth (which is more inconſtant than the air, *&c.*) and eſpecially the impatience, and reſtleſs toſſing of a young man's mind, his cunning and ſleights, when he goes a wooing; and the wonderful arts he hath to ſlide into the heart of a maid, and win her love.

Ver. 20. *Such* is *the way of an adulterous woman; ſhe eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and ſaith, I have done no wickedneſs.*] And yet, the ſubtilty of an adulterous woman is equal to this; both in crafty contrivances of ſecret ways to enjoy her filthy pleaſures; and in caſting a miſt before her Husband's eyes to conceal them, when ſhe is in danger to be diſcovered. For having defiled his Bed, ſhe not only looks modeſtly and demurely, but profeſſes the greateſt innocency; and behaves her ſelf, as if ſhe were the honeſteſt Woman, and the kindeſt Wife too in the world: like one that having eaten ſome forbidden meat, wipes her mouth, and ſays ſhe has not ſo much as taſted it; but abhors to let it come within her lips.

Ver. 21. *For three* things *the earth is diſquieted, and for four* which *it cannot bear.*] And to ſatiſie your other Queſtion, *What things are moſt intolerable?* my anſwer is; that three things make ſuch a diſturbance, that men groan under the load of them: nay, there are four, which are an unſupportable grievance unto thoſe that are oppreſſed by them. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 22. *For a ſervant when he reigneth, and a fool when he is filled with meat.*] *Firſt*, the inſolent cruelty of a vile Slave, when he is advanced to a Throne: *ſecondly*, the petulant rudeneſs of a fortunate fool; eſpecially when he grows debauched, and is in one of his drunken fits:

Ver. 23. *For an odious* woman *when ſhe is married, and an handmaid that is heir to her miſtreſs.*] And *thirdly*, a woman whoſe moroſeneſs, pride and paſſion, and ſuch like ill qualities) make her hated by every body; when ſhe gets a Husband: and *laſtly*, a poor maid ſervant, when ſhe is puffed up by an eſtate, left her by her miſtreſs; or, which is worſe, that having ſupplanted her miſtreſs, and thruſt her, firſt out of her husband's affections, and then out of doors, ſucceeds in her place, and becomes his wife. *See* Arg. [*l*].

Ver. 24. *There be four* things which are *little upon the earth, but they* are *exceeding wiſe:*] To thoſe four *intolerable* things, of which all complain, I will add four more, that are very *contemptible*, but much admired: for though they have no bodily bulk, their wiſdom is exceeding great, and very elaborate. *See* Arg. [*m*]. [*pp*].

Ver. 25. *The ants* are *a people not ſtrong; yet they prepare their meat in the ſummer;*] *Firſt*, the Ants: which are a creature ſo infirm, that one cruſh of our foot kills multitudes of them, and yet ſo provident, as well as induſtrious, that they prepare granaries under ground, with wonderful art, to receive their food: which they gather and lay up in harveſt time; and ſecure it too, that it may ſerve for all the year. *See* VI. 8.

Ver. 26. *The conies* are but *a feeble folk, yet make they their houſes in the rocks;*] *Secondly*, the mountain Mice, are a feeble ſort of creatures alſo, but they have a Leader to give them notice of any danger; and are ſo cunning that they provide for their ſafety in high rocks: into which they have ſeveral entrances and out-lets; that if they be aſſaulted in one port, they may eſcape at another. *See* Arg. [*n*].

Ver. 27. *The locuſts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;*] Next the Locuſts, which herein indeed differ from the former, that they have no King to govern them: yet go forth like Soldiers to battle, in good order: and when they fall upon the ſpoil, divide it among themſelves, without any quarrel or contention. *See* Arg. [*o*].

Ver. 28. *The ſpider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings palaces.*] *Laſtly*, (The Spider, which weaves a curious web, or rather) The little ſpotted Lizzard, which takes faſt hold even on the flat cieling of houſes; and there goes (with its body hanging down into the air) in purſuit of its prey: which as it nimbly catches; ſo it intrudes it ſelf to hunt for it, even in Kings Palaces. *See* Arg. [*p*].

Ver. 29. *There be three* things *which go well, yea, four are comely in going:*] And here after the conſideration of theſe four contemptible things, it will be fit to anſwer your laſt Queſtion, *What things are moſt ſtately?* and there are three, or rather four things, whoſe motion is majeſtick, and go after a goodly manner.

Ver.

Ver. 30. *A lion* which is *ſtrongeſt among beaſts, and turneth not away for any.*] *Firſt* the lion, when he is come to his full growth; who is the moſt heroical and undaunted of all creatures; never turning his back for fear of the greateſt multitude of hunters, or dogs that ſet upon him.

31. *A grey-hound, an he-goat alſo, and a king, againſt whom* there is *no riſing up.*] Next to him a ſtrong and generous *Horſe*; eſpecially when he is girt and equipped (as we ſpeak) for the battle: and then the *He-goat* with his long beard: when he walks in pompous ſtate before the flock. And *laſtly*, a proſperous *King*, of invincible courage; eſpecially when he reigns in the hearts of his people, and marches at the head of an unanimous, victorious Army whom none dare riſe up to oppoſe. *See* Arg. [q].

Ver. 32. *If thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting up thy ſelf, or if thou haſt thought evil, lay thine hand upon thine mouth.*] If thy pride or thy paſſion hath ingaged thee, in ſome fooliſh action, whereby thou haſt diſgraced thyſelf; or made thee contrive and endeavour any thing that is unwarrantable; do not add one fault to another, by excuſing it, or blaming any body but thyſelf for it; much leſs by quarrelling at thoſe that admoniſh thee of it, and reprehend thee for it: but ſtop at the firſt motion to this, and ſilently acknowledge thy error. *See* Arg. [r].

Ver. 33. *Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the noſe bringeth forth blood: ſo the forcing of wrath bringeth forth ſtrife.*] For from little things there is an eaſy progreſs unto greater. And juſt as you ſee Milk is firſt preſſed out of the Cow's udder, and then being ſhaken in the churn is forced into butter; and as the noſe being wrung, though at firſt it only purge itſelf, yet if it be harder preſſed, there comes out blood: even ſo, words paſſing to and fro, raiſe an heat, and that if continued, ſtirs up anger; and that, making men vehemently inſiſt upon their opinion, or their deſire, turns into ſcolding; and that, in the iſſue, grows up to quarrels, and irreconcileable enmities.

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *It is generally taken for granted, both by Hebrew and Chriſtian Writers, that King* Lemuel, *whoſe Mother gave him the Precepts contained in this Chapter, was* Solomon; *whom* Bathſheba *took early care to inſtruct in his duty, being, as ſome of no ſmall name fancy, divinely inſpired with the gift of Prophecy. But, as all this depends merely upon conjecture, and that without the leaſt ground, ſo there is no good reaſon aſſigned why* Solomon *ſhould here be called* Lemuel; *and not by the name he hath both in the beginning of the* Preface *to this Book, I.* Prov. 1. *and in the entrance of the* firſt Part *Chap. X. 1. and of the laſt Collection alſo (XXV. 1.) made by the men of* Hezekiah: *whom* Grotius *fancies to be the King here mentioned, under the name of* Lemuel; *only for this reaſon, that this Chapter follows the Collection of Proverbs made by his Servants: which hath no force at all in it; for the words of* Agur *follow more immediately; which he cannot aſcribe to* Hezekiah.

And therefore it is more reaſonable to conceive this Lemuel *to have been a Prince in ſome other Country; who had gathered ſome weighty Sentences taught him by his Mother (whoſe name is unknown) which it was thought fit to adjoyn to the foregoing: becauſe they are very wiſe, and of great moment; as if they proceeded from a prophetical ſpirit. And it is only the vanity of the Jewiſh Nation, who would incloſe all wiſdom within the bounds of their own Country, which hath made them aſcribe that which follows in this Chapter to* Solomon *and* Bathſheba. *For which, as I ſaid, there is is no colour: but it appears by the Hiſtory of the Queen of* Sheba, *and the Embaſſies which came from the Kings thereabouts, who ſent to hear the wiſdom of* Solomon (1 Kin. *IV.* ult.) *that there were even in thoſe times, great perſons very inquiſitive after knowledge, as there had been, in the times foregoing, in thoſe Eaſtern Countries, and in* Egypt; *which was famous for wiſe men,* 1 Kings *IV.* 30. *where we read of the* wiſdom of the Children of the Eaſt (*i. e.* Arabia, *where* Job *a conſiderable Prince, and the reſt of his Friends, lived in former ages*) *and the wiſdom of* Egypt. *Of which Country ſome have thought thoſe famous men to have been, who are mentioned in the next words,* v. 31. *where this demonſtration is given that* Solomon's *wiſdom excelled all the wiſdom of thoſe Countries,* for he was wiſer than Ethan, the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, *&c. upon which words,* Gaſper Sanchez *notes, that the* Sedar Olam *ſays,* theſe were Egyptian wiſe men. *But it is not good to take things upon truſt; for I find upon examination of the place (which is Chap. XX. of the greater Book of that name) that it ſaith no ſuch thing, but only this, that* the Sons of Zara, Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Chalcol and Darda (*mentioned* 1 Chron. II. 6.) were

were Prophets, who prophecied in Egypt. *But however this be, that very Book acknowledges in the next Chapter; that* there were Prophets in other Countries, before the Law of Moſes was given: tho' after the delivery of it, the Holy Spirit, *they fancy,* forſook all the world but them; immediately upon the ſpeaking of thoſe words, *XXXIII.* Exod. 16. *XXXIV.* 6. *For which aſſertion, as there is not the leaſt ſhadow of reaſon, ſo ſuppoſing it were true, it muſt notwithſtanding be confeſſed that there remained ſtill among other Nations, many excellent and wiſe perſons both Men and Women: who had ſuch communication alſo with the* Jews, *that many of them were proſelyted to their Religion: which might have countenanced their Authors if they had ſaid (and it ſeems to me a better fancy than any they have) that* Lemuel's *Mother was a* Jewiſh Lady *married to ſome Prince of another Country, by whom ſhe had this Son; and took care of his Inſtitution in the wiſdom of her people.*

And by the uſe of the word bar *three times for a* Son, *in the beginning of this Inſtruction (which is no where uſed in this Book before, nor in the whole* Bible *more than once, II.* Pſal. 12.) *one would gueſs this* Lemuel *to have been ſome great perſon in* Chaldæa. *For in the next Verſe alſo* (v. 4.) *we meet with the word* Melachin (Kings) *according to the termination in the Language of that Country.*

[b] *But this is all uncertain, and therefore I proceed no farther in it: but only note, that whoſoever was the Mother of* Lemuel, *ſhe was mightily ſolicitous to have him do well: as appears by verſe the* ſecond. *Which ſome think to be a paſſionate expreſſion, when ſhe ſaw him begin to incline to evil courſes; as if ſhe had ſaid:* What doſt thou mean my Son, *&c. But it is more likely, that it proceeded from a tender concern for his well-doing, as ſoon as ever he grew up; whilſt he was yet innocent and untainted. And that he might ſo continue, ſhe gives him* three *or rather* four *of the moſt proper Advices, that could be thought of for a Prince.*

[c] First, *to ſubdue that luſt, which ſhe knew to be very violent in youth; eſpecially in young Kings; who have more provocations, and are apt to take more licenſe than other men: but bring thereby ſuch miſchiefs upon themſelves, and their Kingdoms, as are not to be repaired; but often end in their deſtruction,* v. 3.

[d] *In order to this, ſhe admoniſhes him, in the* ſecond *place, to avoid drunkenneſs; and to preſerve himſelf perfectly ſober; whereby he would be fit alſo for counſel; and be able likewiſe to give a right judgment, when cauſes are brought before him,* v. 4. *which ſome extend ſo far, as to think ſhe would not have him drink any* wine *at all, or other* ſtrong Liquors, *(of which there were ſeveral made of* honey, *or* dates, *and divers other things; which go under the name of* Schechar.) *But it is more reſonable to look upon it, to caution againſt exceſs: which is dangerous in all men, but eſpecially in thoſe that are to govern others, as well as themſelves. For then they blurt out the greateſt ſecrets; as the Vulgar tranſlate the latter part of the verſe; or grow furious and outrageous, as the LXX. tranſlate the ſame paſſage: but both of them without any ground that I can ſee in the* Hebrew *Text.*

[e] *In which follows,* v. 9. *the true reaſon of this prohibition; and then an account* (v. 6.) *of their condition, to whom a larger quantity than ordinary, of wine or ſtrong drink, is fit to be allowed. Not to* Kings, *who have innumerable ways to relieve their cares, and to divert themſelves when any thing troubles them: but to poor miſerable people, that are ready to faint under their heavy burthens and oppreſſions. For whom this is a preſent relief; and the only one ſometimes they are capable of; when they are in a very melancholy condition. And they that are of ſuch a temper, or are otherways made exceeding ſad, can better bear a great deal of wine, without any diſorder, than the ſanguine, and they that are gay and merry. There are thoſe, that by* men ready to periſh, *have underſtood ſuch as were* condemned to die, *and* going to execution. *Unto whom it was the cuſtom to give a draught of wine, to ſupport their ſpirits; and in the degenerate ages of the Jewiſh Commonwealth, they put ſomething into it to intoxicate the poor wretches, ſo that they might be inſenſible of pain. And ſome imagine this cuſtom took its original from this place in the* Proverbs; *though it be not the true ſenſe of the words. For the latter part of this verſe, and that which follows,* v. 7, *gives the beſt explication of the firſt: and they ſhew ſhe ſpeaks of thoſe that were* miſerably poor. *And ſo the beſt* Hebrew *Expoſitors interpret thoſe words, XXVI.* Deut. 4. *my Father was a Syrian,* ready to periſh: *that is, extreme poor; and in want of all things.*

[f] *And thus having enlarged this* ſecond *Advice a little, ſhe paſſes to the* third: *which is* (v. 8.) *to take ſuch care that Juſtice be exactly adminiſtred (without which no Kingdom can ſubſiſt) as himſelf to undertake the defence of thoſe, who were in danger to loſe a good cauſe; for want of an Advocate to plead it for them, or to open the true ſtate of it, &c. Eſpecially ſhe commends to him, the patronage of* Strangers, Orphans, *and* poor *indigent people. The* firſt *of which in the* Hebrew, *are called* children of change; *or* that are paſſed by: *That is, perſons who* have changed their country; *or that are in danger to* ſuffer grievous alterations *in their condition,*

dition, if right be not done them; or who are deſerted by all, *and have none to ſtand by them. Several other ways there are to explain the phraſe; but to the ſame purpoſe.*

[g] *But the great care of Parents, being to ſee their Son well married, ſhe concludes with the deſcription of ſuch a wife, as ſhe would have him ſeek: which takes up the reſt of the Chapter, from* V. 10. *to the end. And it is in the form of a* Poem *(as S.* Hierom *takes it) conſiſting of a ſort of* Iambick *verſes: each of which begins with a new Letter of the* Alphabet *in order; the* tenth *with* Aleph, *the* eleventh *with* Beth, *and ſo to the bottom. Which was an elegant ſort of compoſure among the Ancients, and a help to Memory alſo; as we ſee in ſeveral* Pſalms, *and other parts of Scripture.*

Now whether ſhe compoſed theſe verſes herſelf, or got her ſenſe expreſſed by ſome eminent Poet, cannot be known; nor is it material. But I do not think fit to follow the conjecture of Huetius *(in his late* Demonſtr. Evang.) *who imagines the words of* Lemuel's *Mother to end with the* ninth *verſe: and here to begin a diſtinct compoſition of ſome other perſon: ſuppoſe* Solomon. *For though this following Poem, be disjoyned from the foregoing words, in the LXX; and differs herein from the reſt that is in the beginning of every verſe, the order of the* Hebrew Alphabet *is obſerved: yet there being no words in the head of it as there is Chap. XXX, and the beginning of this Chapter, to denote it to belong to another Author, I take it to be of the ſame piece with the firſt nine verſes. That is, to be a Copy of Verſes, delivered to* Lemuel *by his Mother, in commendation of an excellent woman: which perhaps ſhe did not make herſelf (though there be no proof of that, and both* Deborah *and* Hannah *we find were Poets) but, notwithſtanding, being recommended to him by her; would, ſhe thought, have the ſame authority with him, as if ſhe had been the Author. And it is very obſervable, that the general character of ſuch a woman as ſhe would have him marry, is* eſcheth chajil *a* vertuous woman, *we tranſlate it. Which word* chajil, *ſignifies both* ſtrenth (*or rather* valour *and* courage) *and* riches *and* vertue. *And, in the deſcription of fitting perſons for the Magiſtracy,* Jethro *in general ſaith, they ſhould be* anſchee chajil *(XVIII.* Exod. 21. *which we tranſlate* able men: *and then follows more particularly wherein their* ability *ſhould conſiſt,* ſuch as fear GOD, men of truth, hating covetouſneſs. *I take therefore* eſcheth chajil *to include in it a great* fear of GOD *(mentioned afterward,* V. 30.) *which is ſo powerful as to endue one with courage to do well, when piety is contemned; nay, laught at and abuſed: I have not therefore omitted this, among other words, to expreſs the force of this phraſe.*

[h] *And then follow, after this, abundance of of other good qualities, which are included in this: ſuch as chaſtity; and ſuch a care of her husband's eſtate, that he might have a perfect confidence in her management; love to him without moroſeneſs: diligence in all houſhold affairs: frugality; gentleneſs in the government of her Family, a prudent care in the education of her children; and in ſetting all the Family to ſome employment or other; and increaſing alſo her husband's eſtate, and yet giving liberally to the poor; affability, and courteſy to all, &c. which excellent indowments if her Son found in a wife, ſhe knew it would be a certain means to preſerve him, from following other women* (V. 3.) *when he took perfect delight in her company: and from* drunkenneſs *alſo* (V. 4.) *which few fall into, who entirely love their wives, and ſtudy to pleaſe them in all things: for they generally abhor this loathſome vice. In order to this ſhe would have him marry ſuch an one, as he could perfectly confide in; and never in the leaſt ſuſpect of any levity, or unfaithfulneſs, or careleſneſs, when he was abroad,* V. 11. *and would never be croſs to him; but always loving, and kind, and pleaſing, when he was at home,* V. 12.

[i] *An excellent houſewife alſo; prone to take any pains herſelf, that ſhe might give a good example to others: particularly in the Linen, and Woollen Manufacture; in which the greateſt women, is appears by ancient Authors, conſtantly employed themſelves heretofore, with ſuch diligence, as is highly praiſed in their Books,* V. 13. *where to expreſs her propenſion to this work, he aſcribes a* willingneſs *and* forwardneſs *to her hands; juſt as XXI.* Prov. 25. *he makes the hands of the ſluggard to be averſe to labour.*

[k] *Which turns to a great account, ſhe ſhews, both in foreign commodities,* V. 14. *and in the purchaſe of land,* V. 16. *which the good houſewife herſelf views, and walks about with great expedition* (V. 17.) *tucking up her garments (as we ſpeak) that ſhe may be fit for motion every where: and not minding fine clothes more than her buſineſs, nor for fear of ſpoiling them, neglecting that; but preferring ſtrength in her arms acquired by labour, before the Ornaments wherewith they are wont to be adorned.*

[l] *The profit of which ſhe finds is ſo great, that it makes her love labour better than ſleep; and when there is haſte of work, to continue it all night: ſo* V. 18. *may be expounded.*

After which follows V. 19. *another inſtance of humble greatneſs. Then her charity to the poor,* V. 20. *her care of her own family,* V. 21. *where the laſt word having different ſenſes, I have expreſſed them all in the Paraphraſe.*

[m] *And*

[m] *And then is wiſely mentioned*, v. 22. *her magnificence in the hanging of her houſe, and of her bed, and in her own apparel: which was the more allowable, when the poor were not neglected; and the decking her ſelf and houſe, did not make her forget their neceſſities. The particular words there I have not room to explain. Nor thoſe which follow*, v. 24. (*after ſhe had mentioned the honour her husband would get by ſuch a wife*, v. 23.) *for I think it is needful to give a brief account of* v. 25.

[n] *Which ſeems not unfitly tranſlated by* Caſtalio *to this ſenſe, that* ſhe being thus amply provided, and fortified, as it were, againſt all accidents; need not fear any want in future times. *But conſidering what follows*, v. 26, 27. *I have choſen only to touch on that ſenſe; and to take* ſtrength and honour *for the excellent qualities belonging to her: which I have called her* principal ornaments; *becauſe the* Hebrews *are wont to expreſs that which adorns any perſon, and is moſt proper to them, by the name of* clothing: *as CXXXII.* Pſal. 9. thy Prieſts ſhall be clothed with righteouſneſs.

[o] *The reſt I muſt wholly omit, and only obſerve, that* the fear of the LORD *in the concluſion* (v. 30.) *is the foundation of all theſe vertues* (*which will either not be found, where there is no devout ſenſe of God; or not be conſtant and equal, but vary as ſeveral paſſions govern and rule their ſpirits*) *eſpecially when it is in ſuch a high degree, that a woman values herſelf for* the fear of the Lord, *more than any thing elſe. So the LXX. tranſlate it*; A prudent woman is commended; but ſhe praiſes the fear of the Lord: *which may have this ſenſe alſo, that* her vertues commend Religion unto others. Religion itſelf is honoured by her excellent vertues: *which are ſo exemplary, that they make others in love with them, as well as with her.*

I conclude all with the obſervation of Melanchton, *that this Deſcription, which he calls* Speculum honeſtæ Matronæ, *is altogether ſimple and plain, without any ſuch allegories as* Simonides *uſed, who ſaid*, He was happy that married a wife like a Bee: *and that all this, in a manner, is comprehended by the Apoſtle in thoſe words to* 1 Timothy *II.* ult. *ſhe ſhall be ſaved in Child bearing, if they continue* in faith, *and* charity, and holineſs, with ſobriety. Faith, *ſaith he, is the acknowledgment of the true God, and confidence in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, (that is, belief of the whole Goſpel) out of which ſprings the* love of God, *and from thence the love of her Husband and Children: and then* holineſs *or* ſanctification, *which is that vertue we call* chaſtity, *and* laſtly temperance, *as he tranſlates it, moderation in meat and drink; or rather, all manner of* ſober behaviour, *and* prudence, *in the Government of the family, and in the moderation of all ſorts of expences*, &c. *which things the Apoſtle particularly mentions; becauſe in the enumeration of Vertues, it is the manner of the holy Writers, to name thoſe only, which are moſt proper and ſuitable to every one's ſtate and and vocation.*

Ver. 1. *THE words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.*] Unto thoſe Sayings of *Agur*, let theſe of King *Lemuel* be added and conſidered: which are weighty Sentences alſo (XXX. 1.) which his Mother taught him with ſuch authority, as if ſhe had been a Propheteſs. *See* Arg. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *What my ſon? and what, the ſon of my womb? and what, the ſon of my vows?*] And with no leſs tenderneſs and affection alſo, ſaying: Hearken, my dear Son, for whoſe well-doing, O how much am I concerned? I want words to expreſs the care I have about it: I am at a loſs how to inſtruct thee according to my wiſhes: what ſhall I deſire thee to do for my ſake, who endured ſo much for thee; when I carried thee in my womb, and brought thee forth from thence? what ſhall I pray thee to do? for whom I have made ſo many prayers to God; and vows too, if I might but ſee thee come ſafe into the world, and grow to be a man, and ſit upon a Throne. *See* Arg. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *Give not thy ſtrength unto women, nor thy ways to that which deſtroyeth kings.*] In the firſt place, let me prevail with thee, as thou loveſt me, and as thou loveſt thy ſelf, to be chaſt in thy deſires of bodily pleaſures, and not to give up thyſelf to follow thy luſt after women; which will deſtroy the ſtrength of thy body, weaken thy mind, and exhauſt thy treaſures: that is, engage thee in ſuch courſes as are the bane of Kings; and, by making them neglect their Government, have brought many of them and their Kingdoms to utter ruin. *See* Arg. [*c*].

Ver. 4. It is *not for kings, O Lemuel*, it is *not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes ſtrong drink:*] And next to this, O *Lemuel*, Kings of all other men, Kings, I ſay, ſhould be ſparing, very ſparing in the uſe of wine, and of all other intoxicating drink: and ſo ſhould their Counſellors, and Commanders of Armies, and Judges, and all other Miniſters and Officers. *See* Arg. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Leſt they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.*] For they may injure more than themſelves, when they are in drink. If a Cauſe, for inſtance, be brought before a Prince

Prince or a Judge, and his thoughts are confuſed by the fumes of wine, he may quite forget the ſtanding Rules whereby he ought to determine it: and things appearing to him quite otherwiſe than they are, he may not only judge amiſs, but unjuſtly condemn thoſe that ought to have been acquitted; and undo poor and afflicted people, by giving away their right, when the comfort of their whole life depends upon his juſtice.

Ver. 6. *Give ſtrong drink unto him that is ready to periſh, and wine to thoſe that be of heavy hearts.*] If the liberal uſe of wine and ſtrong drink, is to be indulged to any body, it is to thoſe miſerable wretches, and the meaner ſort of perſons: whom it may be charity to comfort therewith, when they are in danger to periſh, for want of the neceſſary ſupports of life; or are oppreſſed with grief and ſorrow in any other deplorable condition. *See* Arg. [*e*].

Ver. 7. *Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his miſery no more.*] Then bring forth plenty of wine, and ſet it before ſuch a diſconſolate perſon: let him drink freely till he hath cheered his heart, and raiſed his drooping ſpirits, and be able to think of ſomething elſe, beſide his poverty and miſery; nay, till he be ſo merry, as quite to forget the cares and weariſome labours that it brings upon him.

Ver. 8. *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cauſe of all ſuch as are appointed to deſtruction.*] And that's the third thing I beg of thee, to adminiſter juſtice exactly to all thy Subjects, and not merely commit the care of it unto others: but ſit thyſelf upon the bench; and if thou ſeeſt a man in danger to loſe his right, becauſe he is not able to make it out, and through fear, or ignorance, or want of elocution, cannot ſpeak for himſelf, keep not ſilence, but undertake his defence; eſpecially if it be the cauſe of ſtrangers, who underſtand not the Laws, and perhaps are in danger to ſuffer ſome great damage, in their bodies, credits, or eſtates. *See* Arg. [*f*].

Ver. 9. *Open thy mouth, judge righteouſly, and plead the cauſe of the poor and needy.*] And when thou haſt cleared the righteouſneſs of their cauſe, fear not to pronounce the ſentence boldly, according as the Laws require: Let no man perſuade thee to admit of delays, but bring the buſineſs to a ſpeedy iſſue; that he who is poor, nay, a mere beggar, may neither be oppreſſed by doing him injuſtice, or by deferring to do him right.

Ver. 10. ¶ *Who can find a vertuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*] And now, next to this, I ſhall commend a good wife unto thee: In the choice of whom, a ſingular care ought to be employed. But alas! ſuch a woman as I would have is ſcarce, and hard to be found. One that is not only induſtrious, but pious, and can command herſelf, as well as govern her family: being enriched with all thoſe vertuous qualities, which make her far more valuable, than all the pearls or precious ſtones, that women love to be adorned withal. *See* Arg. [*g*].

Ver. 11. *The heart of her husband doth ſafely truſt in her, ſo that he ſhall have no need of ſpoil.*] I can only give the character of her (which may ſerve to direct others as well as thee, in their ſearch after ſuch a perſon) in whoſe chaſtity, as well as prudence, frugality, and fidelity in ordering affairs at home, her Husband hath ſuch a confidence, that he may go abroad, and attend the publick affairs; without the leaſt care of ſolicitude what will become of his domeſtick concerns; and not be tempted to inrich himſelf, or ſupply his own neceſſities, with the ſpoil of other men. *See* Arg. [*h*].

Ver. 12. *She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.*] She will not only endeavour to anſwer his love, with an equal affection, but to provoke and excite it, by pleaſing him in every thing; and avoiding whatſoever is ungrateful to him: nay, by deſerving well of him, and ſtudying to promote the intereſt of him and his family, and to maintain his honour and reputation; and that not only by fits and in a good humour, but all the days of her life; even after he is dead, if ſhe ſurvive him. *See* Arg. [*h*].

Ver. 13. *She ſeeketh wooll, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.*] Idleneſs is ſo hateful to her, that ſhe need not be deſired to employ herſelf in ſome piece of good houſwifry: but of her own accord ſets up a Linen and Woollen Manufacture; to which ſhe applies her own hands ſo willingly, as well as dexterouſly, that it appears ſhe delights in the work. *See* Arg. [*i*].

Ver. 14. *She is like the merchants ſhips; ſhe bringeth her food from a-far.*] And therewith ſhe maintains her family without expence, by carrying on as a gainful traffick for foreign commodities (which ſhe gets in exchange for theſe) as if her husband ſet out a Fleet of Merchant Ships; to fetch them from far diſtant Countries.

Ver. 15. *She riſeth alſo while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her houſhold, and a portion to her maidens.*] Nor doth ſhe indulge her ſelf in over much ſleep, but is an early riſer before the break of day; to make proviſion for thoſe that are to go abroad to work in the fields; and to

ſet her maidens their ſeveral tasks at home.

Ver. 16. *She conſidereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands ſhe planteth a vineyard.*] So far ſhe is from waſting her husband's eſtate, that by her prudent management ſhe continually increaſes it: firſt purchaſing a field for corn, when ſhe meets with one that ſhe judges worth her money; and then, out of the mere product of her own labours, adding a vineyard to it, which ſhe cauſes to be well planted.

Ver. 17. *She girdeth her loyns with ſtrength, and ſtrengthneth her arms.*] And as her diligence is unwearied, ſo ſhe is neither ſlow in her diſpatches, nor refuſes any pains: but nimbly beſtirs herſelf, and goes roundly (as we ſay) about her buſineſs: nay, exerciſes her arms to the ſtrongeſt labours, both within doors and without. *See* Arg. [*k*].

Ver. 18. *She perceiveth that her merchandiſe* is *good: her candle goeth not out by night.*] For, finding by ſweet experience not only how wholſome labour is, but what profit her traffick yields, ſhe doth not conclude her work with the day; but continues it as much in the night as can be ſpared from neceſſary ſleep. *See* Arg. [*l*].

Ver. 19. *She layeth her hands to the ſpindle, and her hands hold the diſtaff.*] And ſhe doth not think it beneath her quality to put her hands to the ſpindle: but twiſts the thread or the yarn with her own fingers; and winds them with her own hands.

Ver. 20. *She ſtretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, ſhe reacheth forth her hands to the needy.*] Which ſhe ſtretches forth with no leſs forwardneſs to relieve the poor: being not only for getting all ſhe can, but for giving liberally, out of her gains, to needy people; whom ſhe ſupplies cheerfully as well as bountifully; and extends her charity not only to thoſe who are near, but to thoſe who are remoter from her.

Ver. 21. *She is not afraid of the ſnow for her houſhold: for all her houſhold* are *clothed with ſcarlet.*] Yet ſuch is her prudence withal, that her own Family and domeſtick Servants are in no danger to ſuffer hereby, in the hardeſt winter: for ſhe provides them with change of raiment, for the ſeveral ſeaſons, and with double garments when the weather is cold; nay, not only clothes them, but adorns them ſo, that they may appear in a ſplendid manner, when they are to wait upon her. *See* Arg. [*l*].

Ver. 22. *She maketh herſelf coverings of tapeſtry, her clothing* is *ſilk and purple.*] The furniture of her Houſe alſo is very noble, and her own apparel ſuitable to it: in which her greatneſs is not the leſs, but the more conſpicuous; becauſe they are of her own making. *See* Arg. [*m*].

Ver. 23. *Her husband is known in the gates, when he ſitteth among the elders of the land.*] And ſo are her husband's robes; which make him noted, when he comes into the Courts of Judicature, and ſits among the Senators of the Country: who call him a happy man in ſuch a wife, as doth him honour, and eaſes him of all his cares, but only thoſe of the publick buſineſs: which her wiſdom, diligence and prudent management, gives him leiſure wholly to attend.

Ver. 24. *She maketh fine linen, and ſelleth it, and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.*] For ſuch is her induſtry, that ſhe exerciſes more arts than one or two, to inrich her family; making, for inſtance, very fine linen, with embroidered belts, and girdles curiouſly wrought; which ſhe ſells to the Phœnician merchant.

Ver. 25. *Strength and honour* are *her clothing, and ſhe ſhall rejoyce in time to come.*] But her principal ornaments are, the firmneſs, conſtancy and vigour of her mind; her modeſt, comely and decent behaviour; her generous and honourable way of dealing with every one: which (accompanied with the fore-named diligence, *&c.*) make her ſo happy, that they free her from all fear of what may be hereafter; and prepare her to meet old-age, and death itſelf, with joyful ſatisfaction. *See* Arg. [*m*].

Ver. 26. *She openeth her mouth with wiſdom, and in her tongue* is *the law of kindneſs.*] Unto which add, this ſingular grace; that as ſhe is neither ſilent nor talkative, ſo ſhe loves not to talk of frivolous, but of ſerious things; of which, when occaſion ſerves, ſhe diſcourſes pertinently and judiciouſly, not expreſſing her paſſion but her wiſdom: which ſhews itſelf not only in the conſtant ſoftneſs and ſweetneſs of her unprovoking language; but in the inſtructions and exhortations ſhe gives unto doing good, exerciſing mercy, living peaceably and lovingly together; which is the Leſſon ſhe inculcates every where.

Ver. 27. *She looketh well to the ways of her houſhold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs.*] But eſpecially in her own family, where ſhe narrowly obſerves the motions and manners of every one; whom ſhe neither ſuffers to gad abroad at their pleaſure, nor to labour at home without good inſtructions; but teaches them how to live as they ought; and by this, if ſhe did nothing elſe, deſerves the bread ſhe eats.

Ver. 28. *Her children ariſe up, and call her bleſſed; her husband* alſo, *and he praiſeth her.*] Happy are the Sons of ſuch a mother, whoſe care both of their good Education, and

and to make provision for them, excites them, when they are grown up, to extol her vertues: happy is the husband of such a wife, whom he can never sufficiently commend; but having recited all her praises, saith,

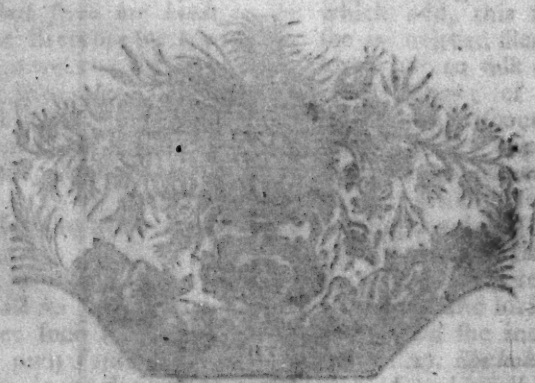
Ver. 29. *Many daughters have done vertuously, but thou excellest them all.*] Daughters may do much by their housewifry, but nothing like to the care of a vertuous wife; and of all the wives that have done worthily, and mightily advanced the state of their family, there were never any comparable unto thee; whose merits far transcend them all.

Ver. 30. *Favour* is *deceitful, and beauty* is *vain:* but *a woman* that *feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.*] A handsome shape and graceful behaviour is very taking; and so is a good complexion and lovely features: but, alas! as the greatest beauty soon fades and vanishes, so many ill qualities may lie conceal'd under goodly looks (which will utterly spoil all the happiness that a man promised himself in such a choice) and therefore a truly religious woman, who dares not any way offend the LORD, is that amiable person, and she alone, who will please a man always, and deserve perpetual praises.

Ver. 31. *Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.*] Let every one extol her vertue, for I cannot do it enough; let her not want the just commendations of her pious labours: but while some are magnified for the nobleness of the stock from whence they spring, others for their fortune, others for their beauty, others for other things; let the good deeds which she herself hath done be publickly praised in the greatest Assemblies; where if all men should be silent, her own works will declare her excellent worth.

The End of the PROVERBS.

Printed in the Year, 1719.



A

PARAPHRASE

UPON THE

BOOK

OF

ECCLESIASTES.

WITH

ARGUMENTS to each *Chapter*, and ANNOTATIONS thereupon.

By *SIMON PATRICK*, D. D.
Late Lord Biſhop of *Ely*.

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THE PREFACE.

I. THIS Book not carrying in the front of it the expreſs Name of *SOLOMON*, it hath emboldned ſome to take the liberty of intitling other authors to it. *Hezekiah*, for inſtance, whom the *Talmudiſts* make to ſpeak thoſe Words in the entrance of it, *The words of the Preacher*, &c. Or *Iſaiah*, as R. *Moſes Kimchi*, with ſome other *Jews*, fancy: Or, to name no more *Zorobabel*, whom *Grotius* (in his Notes upon Chap. XII. 11.) conjectures to have appointed certain men to make this *Collection*. For ſo he would have the word *COHELETH* tranſlated, a *Collector*; or Heaper up of Opinions, rather then a *Preacher*.

II. But there are ſo many paſſages in the Book which agree to none but *Solomon*, that it is a wonder ſo great a man as *Grotius* ſhould be led away from the common Opinion, by ſuch ſlight reaſons, as I ſhall preſently mention. For inſtance, there never was any body that could truly ſpeak thoſe words which we read *v.* 16. of the firſt Chapter, but only *Solomon*. For neither *Hezekiah*, nor *Iſaiah*, nor *Zorobabel* kept ſuch great State, as he did, much leſs excelled him in Wiſdom. And who but he could boaſt of ſuch things as are mentioned *Chap.* II. *v.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. to repreſent the ſplendour wherein he lived, above all that had been before him in *Jeruſalem*? Or, on the contrary, Who had ſuch reaſon as he, to make that ſad complaint (Chap. VII. 26, &c.) of the miſchief he had received by Women? And to omit the reſt, thoſe words in the laſt Chapter, *v.* 9, 10. can belong to none but him, who *ſet in order* many *Proverbs*, as appears in the foregoing Book.

III. Which

III. Which things are ſo convincing, that *Grotius* is forced to acknowledge that *Zorobabel* cauſed this Book to be compoſed in the Name of King *Solomon* (for he was no King himſelf, but a Governour under the King of *Perſia*) repenting of his former vain and ſinful life. Which very acknowledgment carries in it a plain ſolution of the principal Argument, whereby he was led to this odd Opinion: Which is, that he finds ſome words in this Book, that are no where to be met withal, but in *Daniel* and *Ezra*, and the *Chaldee* Interpreters. Which makes it probable, he thinks, that it was written after their Captivity in *Babylon*. But ſuppoſing *Solomon* to write here as a Penitent, after he had frequented the Company of many Outlandiſh Women (of whom we read 1 *Kings* XI. 1, 2.) it need not ſeem ſtrange to us that he had learnt the uſe of many of their words. And ſo, notwithſtanding this Objection, he may ſtill be thought to have been the Author of this Book himſelf: which the *Hebrews* generally conceive to have been written by him, towards the end of his Regin; after he had tried all manner of pleaſures, even to an exceſs. Beſides, in other Books of Scripture there are words, for the ſignification of which we are fain to have reſort unto other languages; and particularly the *Arabick*; becauſe they are not to be found elſewhere in the Scripture; and yet, for all that, might be pure *Hebrew*, according to the language which was then ſpoken, when ſuch books were written.

IV. But it is not fit to ſtay any longer in the Confutation of ſuch a weak reaſon as this; which hath no force in it (though it be the beſt he hath) to make us think of any other Author of this Book, than *Solomon*. Who, if he did not write it himſelf it is certain ſpake the things contained in it: and calls himſelf the *PREACHER*, becauſe of the great gravity and dignity of the Subject, whereof he treats; of which he was wont to ſpeak frequently (Chap. XII. 9.) deſiring it might be underſtood and laid to heart, by the *whole Congregation* of *Iſrael*; as the word *Coheleth* ſeems to import; which in the *Æthiopick* language ſignifies a *Circle*, or a Company of men gathered together, in the form of a *Circle*, as *Ludolphus* hath lately obſerved. For the ſcope of this Diſcourſe is concerning the *chief Good* or happineſs of man: the *great end* he ſhould propoſe to himſelf all his life long. Which is not that, he ſhews which men generally follow: but that which is generally neglected. For moſt men mind nothing, but juſt what is before them: which they will find at laſt, as he had done by ſad experience, to be mere vanity; utterly unable to quiet their minds. Which muſt therefore ſeek for ſatisfaction in ſomething elſe; and, after all their buſy thoughts, deſigns and labours come to this Concluſion, that to *fear God and keep his Commandments*, is the happineſs of man: who ought therefore

therefore to uſe all the pleaſures of this World (which is the only Good it can afford us) with a conſtant reſpect to the future account, we muſt all make to GOD.

V. This, it appears by the beginning and the end of this Book, in the Scope of it. Unto which they that will not attend, are wont to pick out here and there a looſe Sentence, which agrees with their deſires; and then pleaſe themſelves with a fancy that they have got *Solomon* on their ſide, to help to maintain their infidelity: Not conſidering what he aſſerts directly contrary, in other places, Where he preſſes the greateſt and moſt ſerious reverence to Almighty God, IV. 17. V. 1, 2. &c. VIII. 12, 13. XII. 13. together with a remembrance of the future Judgment, III. 17. XI. 9. XII. 14. Works of mercy and charity alſo, whereby we may do good to others, XI. 1, 2, &c. and the contempt of thoſe frivolous pleaſures, which draw our hearts from GOD and from good works, II. 2. VII. 2, &c. All which plainly ſhew, that thoſe words which ſeem to countenance men in their neglect of Religion, and open a Gap to licentiouſneſs, are only Opinions which he intends to confute, according to the method he had propounded to himſelf in this Book. Wherein he firſt repreſents the various ends men drive at; which in the very entrance of it (that men might not miſtake his meaning) he pronounces to be ſo vain; that he had no words ſignificant enough to expreſs their vanity; and then, their different Opinions about GOD, and his Providence, and their own ſouls: and what thoughts he himſelf had toſſed up and down in his mind; which at laſt came to that reſolution I mentioned before, wherewith he ends his Book. In the cloſe of which, to give the greater weight unto what he had ſaid, he adds this: That theſe were not only the reſult of his own thoughts, but the judgment of other Wiſe men, with whom he had conſulted.

Let no man therefore deceive himſelf (to uſe the grave words of *Caſtalio*) as ſome, I wiſh I could ſay a few, have done: who not minding the end and drift of this Book, but having met with ſome one place in it that ſeems to favour their beloved luſts, lay hold on that Scrap alone; and with that endeavour to defend their licentious courſe of life. As if they expected, they ſhould find GOD juſt ſuch a Judge hereafter, as they are of themſelves at preſent.

VI. To compriſe all in a few words. The ſence of the whole *Sermon*, as we may call it, ſeems to be comprehended in this Syllogiſm,

Whatſoever is vain and periſhing cannot make men happy;

But all mens designs here in this World are vain and perishing: Therefore, They cannot by prosecuting such designs make themselves happy.

The Proposition is evident in itself; and needs no Proof. The Assumption therefore he demonstrates in the *six* first Chapters, by an enumeration of Particulars; as I shall shew in the *Argument* before, or *Annotations* upon, each Chapter; And then proceeds, in the rest of the Book, to advise men unto the best course to make themselves happy; evidently proving all along from this inconstancy and vanity of all things here, that he who wishes well to himself, ought to raise his mind above them, to the Creator of the World: and expecting to give an account to him, so to demean himself in the use of all earthly enjoyments, that he devoutly acknowledge his Divine Majesty, fearing, and worshipping Him, and doing his Will.

Such indeed is the dulness of Mankind, that, hearing all was but vanity, they might condemn every thing as evil and hurtful; and declaim too bitterly against this World. Which was so far from *Solomon*'s intention, that having explained the vanity of all our enjoyments here, and the vanity of humane cares, solicitous desires and endeavours; he persuades all men to be content with things present, to give GOD thanks for them, to use them freely with quiet minds: living as pleasantly, and taking as much liberty, as the remembrance of a future account will allow; void of anxious and troublesome thoughts, what will become of them hereafter in this life.

VII. But it may not be amiss perhaps to give a larger account of this *Sermon*; and let the reader see in what method it proceeds. For many men imagine it to be a confused Discourse, which doth not hang together: and therefore have explained this Book, only by giving an account of the meaning of each Verse, as if it were a distinct Sentence, independent on the rest; like those in his *Proverbs*. But *Antonius Corranus*, a most excellent person, in a small Discourse of his upon this Book, written above an hundred years ago; hath drawn such a Scheme of it, as I believe will satisfy those who consider it, that *Solomon* proceeds after an exact order, to deduce what he intended. And therefore I will translate the sense of what he saith, into *English*; which is to this purpose.

VIII. The design of the Author is to find out and to shew, What it is, in which the chief good and complete felicity of man doth consist. As appears by this, that reflecting upon various things in which men place their happiness; at the end of this Discourse upon every

one of them, he rejects them as utterly insufficient for that purpose but continues his search so far till at last he finds it, and declares in the concluding *Epiphonema*, that he had been seeking it, through the whole Discourse, saying, the sum of the matter is this, *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man.*

Now there are two principal Parts of the whole *Sermon*. The *first* of which contains a recital, and confutation, of mens false Opinions about their chiefest Good: the *other* teaches, in what our genuine, true and solid felicity lies; both in this life, and in the next. In both he shews very diligently, what is the end to which a man should direct all his Counsels, Studies and Endeavours; what he ought to follow, as most desirable above all things; and what to avoid, as the extremest of evils.

Of the *first* of these he treats in his VI first Chapters; of the other in as many more that follow. Which is both a perspicuous and exact method. For being to treat of felicity, it was but fitting he should divide it into false, and true; and then define aright what that true felicity is. For we must first shun that which is evil, and then pursue that which is good: according to the frequent Admonitions we meet withal in the holy Prophets.

The first Part.

IX. Now the first part of his Sermon relies upon a proposition, which no body denies, *viz.* That vain, frail and troublesome things cannot make any man happy: And such saith he in the very first words of the Book, are all things here, *Vanity of Vanities*; *i. e.* extremely vain.

Which Assumption it may seem hard to prove, if we consider what account blind Mortals make of their own inventions, counsels, studies and labours, by which they think to attain felicity. But to *Solomon* nothing was more easie; who having made a full and long experiment of all enjoyments here, most evidently demonstrates this by an ennumeration of Parts, and that in an apt, perspicuous, and compendious Order. For he neither confounds the parts; too curiously pursues them; nor mentions all the false Opinions of men about the chiefest Good (which would have been too tedious, if like *Varro* he had told us of *two hundred eighty five*, and yet that he could not reckon all) but reducing the most probable Opinions unto *four* principal Heads, he confutes them by various Arguments; drawn chiefly from adjuncts and effects.

The

The *first* is of those who place Blessedness in the knowledge of natural things, and in humane wisdom, which begins at the 12th Verse of the *first* Chapter, and reaches to the beginning of the *second*. For in the precedent Verses, he only lays a foundation for his discourse, and plains his way to the proof of what he intended.

The *second* is of those who place in it pleasure; which he dispatches, as unworthy of a long confutation, in the three first Verses of the second Chapter. But there being those of this Sect, who joining these two together, *pleasure* and *knowledge*, imagine they will make up a complete happiness; he spends more time in shewing their Vanity; from the 4th Verse of the second Chapter, to the 16th Verse of the *third:* interposing only a *Parenthesis*, wherein he compares *Wisdom* with *Folly*, and the effects of both shews how much the former is to be preferred before the latter.

The *third* touches those who think Honours, Magistracies, and Power in the Commonwealth, to be the highest of all Goods. In which number are they, who seek to extend their Empire, though it be by a vast effusion of their own blood, by which means also they establish their tyranny, when they have acquired it. Which disputation reaches from the 16th Verse of the *third* Chapter, to he 9th Verse of the *fifth*. Yet so, that from the beginning of the *fourth* Chapter to the 13th Verse of the same, he inserts the miseries that grow from such tyrannical administration; and the Vices which break in, upon the impunity of evil Doers, and neglect of the Laws. Particularly, he gives us a lively description, of *Emulation*, and *Covetousness:* two of the foulest and most cruel pests of the Commonwealth. In the *fifth* Chapter also he inserts a Discourse of that superstitious and vain Worship of God; in which some, despising all other things, place their satisfaction: and most lamentably applaud themselves in it. Which Disputation contains in it some excellent Precepts of true Religion and Piety; which the Reader may find in the first *eight* Verses of the *fifth* Chapter.

After which follows the *fourth* Opinion of those who propound to themselves Riches and Wealth as their last end: which if they can attain, they doubt not they shall live very happily. Which extends itself from thence to the 11th Verse of the *sixth* Chapter; where you have the general *Epilogue* of the *first Part*, concerning false felicity.

The other Part.

X. Then follows the *ſecond*, and moſt Elegant as well as uſeful part of the Sermon. In which he teaches, that the felicity, for which men take ſo much pains (every one going his own way to it) is not to be found any where, but in a religious and ſerious fear of GOD: according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſſed are all they that fear the Lord; that walk in his ways*; and again, *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord; that delighteth greatly in his Commandments.* For other things; though they promiſe felicity, yet they cannot perform it; becauſe they have ſuch a mixture of vanity, trouble and grief with them, as will not ſuffer them to be abſolutely good; and becauſe, if they were ſincere, yet they being ſo uncertain, that they may be loſt before we die, and at the beſt are terminated within the narrow bounds of this ſhort life; they cannot give that ſatisfaction and quiet of mind, which we deſire. But the fear of GOD is ſuch a Good that it both gives true contentment, ſatisfaction and tranquility of mind, as long as we live; and when we die, fills us with a ſure hope of a better life: in which true and genuine felicity is accompliſhed.

For the ſum of what can be ſaid in this matter, may be reduced to this Argumentation:

That which can make a man's mind quiet, ſtill and calm, both in life and death; that alone can make him happy.

Now this the Fear of the LORD can do for him, and this alone: Therefore this, and nothing elſe, will make him a happy man.

The Propoſition needs no Proof; For then we feel ourſelves happy, when our minds are ſo quiet and well pleaſed; that they neither grieve, nor fear, nor ſolicitouſly deſire, nor vainly hope for uncertain things: but reſt ſatisfied in that excellent and moſt certain joy and hope, which ariſes out of a pure Conſcience.

The Aſſumption is proved from *two* effects of the Fear of GOD, *viz. Wiſdom* and *Juſtice*. The *firſt* of which teaches us what to follow, and what to fly: and furniſhes us with ſuch caution, that we be not impoſed on, in the choice of that which ſeems to be good for us. The *other* inſtructs us to do our whole Duty, towards GOD, towards our Neighbour, and towards ourſelves. In which *two* all Religion and piety, together with ſatisfaction, tranquility and felicity, is contained.

And becauſe effects are more known than their cauſes, and it would be uncertain what he meant by the fear of GOD, unleſs he explained it by thoſe things wherein it conſiſts; he begins his Diſputation on this Subject with thoſe effects; and employs himſelf wholly in ſhewing what are the Offices of *Wiſdom* and *Juſtice:* that he might inform us not only what is the Chief Good, to which we ought to aſpire; but by what ways and means we may come to it.

XI. Of *Wiſdom* and *Prudence* therefore, which is converſant in the choice of things; he treats in the firſt place; Chapter the *Seventh*; becauſe no man can act either righteouſly, or valiantly, or temperately, unleſs, by the benefit of Prudence, he be before inſtructed what force they are unto our happineſs. He explains therefore its various Offices in ſuch Documents as theſe; *That a good Fame is to be deſired above all things*; *That Death ought to be the Subject of our frequent Meditations*; *That thoſe things are to be avoided, which incite to pleaſure, and the contrary to be followed, which admoniſh us to be modeſt and ſober*; *That ſeverity and gravity are to be preferred before mirth*; *Chaſtiſements and corrections to be willingly admitted*; *Flattery and ſoothing people to be caſhiered*; *Not to be too much diſturbed at calumnies and reproaches*; *To take no Bribes*; *To expect the iſſue and concluſion of things*; *To bridle anger, as an Enemy to reaſon*; *to love the uſe of money, not money itſelf*; and ſuch like, Unto which, laſt of all, he adjoins a brief commendation of Wiſdom; rejecting both the larger explication of its effects, and its praiſes, to the end of the *ninth* Chapter, and beginning of the *tenth*.

Now this *firſt* Part concerning *Wiſdom*, is handled in the *twelve* firſt Verſes of the *ſeventh* Chapter.

XII. Then he enters upon the other, concerning *Juſtice:* which he divides into that which reſpects GOD, and that which reſpects men. The former of which (comprehended under the names of *Religion*, *Piety*, and *Godlineſs*) conſiſts in this: That in the *firſt* place, we conceive aright and judge well of GOD, and of his Providence in the Adminiſtration of humane Affairs; and *then* that we pay him that Honour, Worſhip and Service, which is due unto His Divine Majeſty.

This Diſcourſe, which he touches upon from the 13th to the 16th Verſe of the VIIth Chapter, he reſumes again in the VIIIth Chapter,

Chapter, and purſues it from the 9th Verſe of it, to the 13th Verſe of the IXth Chapter.

As for that *Juſtice* which reſpects others, it is manifold. For it is either towards men, or towards women: Which conſiſts, in a manner, altogether in ſhunning both the Extremes of it, and obſerving an ἐπιείκεια moderation or equity: and hath reſpect to their offences, either againſt ourſelves or others: which we are partly to correct and partly to bear withal. Which is the ſum of his Diſcourſe, from the 16th Verſe, to the beginning of the VIIIth Chapter.

Where interſperſing a few things, after his manner, in the praiſe of Wiſdom, he begins another Diviſion of *Juſtice*: concerning the Duty of Subjects to their Princes, from the *ſecond* Verſe to the *eighth*; and on the other ſide, the Duty of Princes towards their Subjects: of both which, it may be fit to give a larger account. For this *Tractate* is truly Royal, and worthy to be read perpetually, in this moſt turbulent Age, both by high and low: That from hence Subjects may learn to perform Obedience, and the greateſt obſervance both in word and deed towards their Princes; chuſing rather to bear and ſuffer any thing, than to attempt Rebellion againſt them; and Kings may alſo remember, that they ought to govern their Kingdoms, according to the Rules of Law and Equity, and not according to their own will and pleaſure; GOD having committed unto them the Scepter of Juſtice, Clemency, and Welfare of their Subjects; not the Scepter of Cruelty, Tyranny, and Deſtruction.

In which this Wiſe King obſerving both Princes and People, to be too negligent, and that thence ariſeth a very great licenſe in ſinning, leſt well affected minds ſhould be offended at this horrible corruption of manners; he digreſſeth into a long, but very profitable and neceſſary diſputation of GOD's Providence, and the OEconomy of Juſtice. Which though the wicked deny, and deride, becauſe they ſee not ſuch manifeſt difference, as one would expect, made between the Good, and the Bad, in the Events that befal them both; yet he adviſes all that fear the Divine Majeſty not to be dejected and diſheartned at this; nor to ſearch with too much curioſity into GOD's ſecrets; but ſtedfaſtly reſolving, that it ſhall not be well with the wicked, though all things flow at preſent according to their hearts deſire, and that what ſoever the godly may ſuffer now, they ſhall find at laſt that GOD is their Friend; to look upon themſelves therefore as happy men, both in the peace of their Conſcience in this World, and in a ſure and certain hope of a better condition in the other. Upon which account he frequently inculcates this counſel, That they who are ſtudious to fear GOD,

and

and do well, being ſecure of God's Adminiſtration and of the event of things, ſhould enjoy the preſent good things, which his Divine Bounty beſtows upon them; which cheerful minds, and with thankſgiving to Him. This Diſcourſe (which it muſt be confeſſed is not altogether ſo methodical as ſome other) extends from the 9th Verſe of the *eighth* Chapter, to the 13th Verſe of the *ninth*.

And becauſe he had ſhown, that the event of things is not in our own counſel and in humane Wiſdom, but in the hand of God, leſt any body ſhould be ſo weak or perverſe, as thence to conclude, That it is the ſame thing, whether we act wiſely or fooliſh; he again makes a digreſſion into the praiſes of Wiſdom; ſhewing how much it excells folly, from the effects of both. It begins at the 17th Verſe, and reaches to the 4th of the *tenth* Chapter. Where he returns to his Diſcourſes, about the mutual Offices of Juſtice between one another; both of Princes and Subjects.

And then in the *ſix* firſt Verſes of the *eleventh* Chapter, he exhorts moſt earneſtly to Liberality and Almſgiving; which is no ſmall part of righteouſneſs. And with that he concludes the *two* effects of the fear of God; *Wiſdom* and *Juſtice*.

XIII. The reſt of the work is his *Prerogation:* in which he fully opens his Opinion concerning the Chief Good: which he confirms to lie wholly in a truly religious fear of God. Which therefore he ſeriouſly exhorts every one to make their ſtudy as earneſtly as is poſſible: before dull and unactive Old-Age, and Death itſelf, (both which he elegantly deſcribes) come upon us, and, before we think of it, oppreſſes us.

This is the method of this moſt excellent Sermon: which I cannot but exhort all men to ſtudy diligently, and with great intention of mind; both for the Author's ſake and for the matter of it. Which he handles in ſuch a manner, as firſt to draw us from the deſire and love of earthly things; and from the perverſe uſe of them: and then to lead us unto the true and lawful uſe of them, without any offence to God, as well as without hurt to ourſelves. And he teaches us how we may, without a prepoſterous ſolicitude and anxiety about events, enjoy all things in the fear of God; with tranquility and ſatisfaction of mind at preſent; and at laſt, by the ſame Fear of God and obſervance of his Commandments, arrive at a never dying felicity.

To conclude, He interſperſes through the whole Diſcourſe abundance of Common Places, both Philoſophical and Theological; which are

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ſo fitted to make us every way more learned, more prudent, and more pious; that we ſhall find great uſe of them in all the paſſages of our lives.

XIV. Thus that learned *Spaniard* concludes his Preface; which I have contracted, that I might ſet before the Readers eyes in one ſhort view, both the deſign and the proſedure of the Diſcourſe. Of the former (the Deſign) there is no doubt: and the latter is very regular, as it will farther appear, in the explication I ſhall give of it. Wherein I have not followed this Author throughout, in every Part of this Diviſion of the Book; becauſe, though for the moſt part I take it to be accurate enough; yet, I think, in ſeveral places I had reaſon to differ from him; and take another way to make the connexion more eaſy and natural; and the ſenſe thereby more clear and evident.

I beſeech God, that the pains I have taken herein may not be in vain; but prove an effectual means both to make the mind of *Solomon* in this Book better underſtood; and to turn all our minds from theſe frivolous things, about which now they are too much employed, unto the ſolid and full Good which here he recommends to us. Who may be the better truſted in what he ſaith; becauſe he had tried what ſatisfaction could be found in all manner of enjoyments here: and it could not be objected to him that he diſparaged the World, merely becauſe he could not get any ſhare in it, or had not the liberty which was neceſſary to enjoy it. For no man ever had greater plenty, or gave a greater looſe to his deſires; but, after all the experiments he could make came to this reſolution which he had better have taken at firſt; that Religion and Vertue are the only things that can make a man happy.

And perhaps, as God ſuffered St. *Thomas* to doubt of our Saviour's Reſurrection, for the greater confirmation of our Faith; by the ſatisfaction he at laſt received: ſo he let this great man go aſtray, that by his dear-bought experience he might teach us this Wiſdom; to keep the cloſer to God in faithful obedience.

Which it will be a very great ſhame, if we do not learn, who live under the Inſtruction of a greater Maſter than *Solomon*; the Son of God himſelf. By whom we are taught theſe things in a more effectual manner; not only by his Doctrine, but by his whole life and by his death: in which he declared the greateſt neglect and contempt of this World; and that his mind was wholly ſet upon the other.

And what a bleſſed ſort of *Reformation* would it be, if (as *Eraſmus* ſomewhere admirably ſpeaks) we would all lay aſide our diſſenſions, ſtrifes, and quarrels, and ſtudy the Leſſons our LORD hath taught us. Whoſe buſineſs it was in this World, to form unto Himſelf *a people that ſhould wholly depend on Heaven, and placing no confidence in any Earthly ſupport or comfort, ſhould be after another manner rich, after another manner wiſe, after another manner noble, after another manner potent, in one word, after another manner happy: deſigning to attain felicity by the contempt of thoſe things which are vulgarly admired. A people that ſhould be Strangers to filthy luſts, by ſtudying in this fleſh the life of Angels; that ſhould have no need of Divorce, by being able to mend or to bear all manner of Evils; that ſhould be wholly ignorant of Oaths, as thoſe who neither diſtruſt, nor will deceive any body; that make not the getting of money their buſineſs, having laid up their Treaſures in Heaven; that ſhould not be tickled with vain glory, becauſe they refer all to the Glory of Chriſt alone; be void of ambition, as diſpoſed, the greater they are, to ſubmit themſelves, ſo much the more unto all Men, for Chriſt his ſake; that ſhould be unacquainted with wrath, much more with revenge, as ſtudying to deſerve well of thoſe who deſerve ill of them: that ſhould be ſo innocent in their behaviour, as to force commendations even from Heathens; that ſhould be born again to the purity and ſimplicity of Infants; that ſhould live like the Birds of the Air, without care and ſolicitude; among whom there ſhould be the greateſt concord, nothing different from that which is between the Members of the ſame Body; in which mutual Charity ſhould make all things common; that whether there were any good thing it ſhould help to ſupply him that wanted, or any evil thing, it ſhould either be removed or mitigated by the good Offices of others; who ſhould be ſo wiſe by the teaching of the Holy Ghoſt, to live according to the example of Chriſt, as to be the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World, like a City on an Hill, conſpicuous to all the Country round about; whoſe abilities whatſoever they are, ſhould make them forward to help others; to whom this life ſhould ſeem vile, Death deſirable, out of a longing for immortality; who ſhould neither fear tyranny, nor death, nor the Devil himſelf, relying upon the invincible power of Chriſt alone, who ſhould act in all things ſo, as to be ever prepared and and ready for that laſt, and moſt to be wiſhed for Day, when they ſhall take poſſeſſion of true and of eternal felicity.*



A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

BOOK of *ECCLESIASTES.*

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

In the eleven *first Verses he lays the foundation of his following Discourses and makes his way to the proof of what he intends* (viz. *That nothing here can make us solidly happy*) *by shewing how empty all things are; and how short a time a man hath to possess them; and that while it lasts he can only enjoy the same empty things over and over again; till he be cloyed with them. And then,* v. 12. *he enters into a* particular *consideration of the insufficiency of* humane Wisdom *and knowledge alone, to give us full satisfaction: though this be one of the very best things wherein men place their felicity. Which Discourse continues to the end of the Chapter.*

Ver. 1. *THE words of the preacher, the Son of* David *King of Jerusalem.*] These are the words of him, who thought the name of a *Preacher*, or Publick Instructor of GOD's people (to whom he calls aloud in this Book, to mind what he saith concerning the supreme Good of Man) no less honourable, than that of the son of King *David*: whom he succeeded in his Throne; and reigned after him in the holy City *Jerusalem*. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity, all is vanity.*] That Good of which you are all desirous, is not there to be found where you seek it; for all things here below are so frail, so subject to change, and to vanish, that I have not words to express how vain they are

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This is the thing which the *Preacher* firſt undertakes to prove, That they are mere emptineſs, more vain than Vanity itſelf; ſo full of trouble and care, as well as extreamly unſtable, that to no purpoſe are all mens endeavours, who ſeek for ſatisfaction from them; eſpecially if they place their higheſt Good in them. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the ſun?*] For proof of this, let every man ſurvey himſelf; who conſiſts of *body* and of *mind*. And let him ask his *mind*, What great matter there remains, after all it cares for the things of this life? What contentment he or any man elſe in all this World hath reaped by his toilſome labours, and anxious thoughts, wherewith he hath racked himſelf both day and night? Which have often ended in diſappointment; and when he hath enjoyed his deſires, this very thing hath ſpoiled his pleaſures, that he could not long enjoy them. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. One *generation paſſeth away, and* another *Generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.*] For if they do not preſently leave him, he in a ſhort time muſt leave them: his *Body* (the other part of him) being made out of the earth; and therefore how firm and ſolid ſoever it now ſeems, muſt be crumbled into Earth again. Which continues for ever, to receive back thoſe Bodies which come out of it: for no Generation can abide as the Earth doth; but follows the foregoing, as the next that come after ſhall follow it, unto their Graves. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 5. *The ſun alſo ariſeth, and the ſun goeth down and haſteth to his place where he aroſe.*] Out of which they cannot return and ſtand up in their former places, as the Sun, that quickens all things, doth: which in a conſtant and regular courſe ariſeth, and makes no more ſpeed to go down, than it doth to appear the next morning, in the ſame Glory again. No; man dies, and appears here no more; though if he ſhould, it would be to die again. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 6. *The wind goeth toward the South, and turneth about into the North; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.*] Nor is the annual courſe of the Sun leſs certain than its diurnal; but it comes back the next year at a fixed time, to the very ſame Point from whence it moved this. Nay, the Winds, as fickle and inconſiſtent as they are, whirling with a marvellous ſwiftneſs round the earth, return at laſt to the ſame Quarter from whence they ſhifted (and ſome of them the very ſame months of the year) to fetch the ſame compaſs, and run the ſame round they did before.

Ver. 7. *All the rivers run into the ſea, yet the ſea is not full: unto the place from whence the Rivers come, thither they return again.*] The like Circle there is in watry Bodies, for the Torrents and Brooks, that the Rain makes, run into the Rivers, and ſo into the ſea, which nevertheleſs doth not ſwell beyond its Bounds, becauſe it reſtores all back again to their former places, by the Vapors which the Sun exhales, or by ſecret paſſages through the Earth: Whilſt poor Man alone (who is compounded of all theſe, of the Earth, the Air, the Water, and ſuch heat as the Sun adminiſters) paſſeth away and cometh to his place no more; but muſt be content to imitate theſe things, only in their reſtleſs agitations.

Ver. 8. *All things* are *full of labour, man cannot utter* it: *the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.*] Which is another thing, that encreaſeth his trouble; that in this ſhort life, which he cannot live over again when it is done, he can neither be quiet, nor move with eaſe (as the things forenamed do) not yet acquire ſatisfaction with his perpetual motion; but tries himſelf even in his pleaſures; and finds all ſort of buſineſs ſo laborious, that he himſelf is not able to tell how tedious it is; and after all is done, he is no better pleaſed than when he firſt began. For the eye (for inſtance) and the ear, which are the nobleſt and moſt capacious ſenſes, having ſeen and heard all manner of things, are as deſirous of ſome new entertainment, as if they had enjoyed none at all. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 9. *The thing that hath been, is* is that *which ſhall be; and that which is done,* is *that which ſhall be done; and* there is *no new* thing *under the ſun.*] But alas! the very ſame things (like the ſun, the Wind, and the Rivers) come about again; and we are cloyed with ſeeing and hearing what hath often preſented itſelf unto us already, or, at leaſt, hath been in times before us, and will be again, in thoſe that ſucceed us: There is nothing done now, but (the perſons being changed) will be acted over again in future Ages; to whom the Sun can ſhew nothing but what we have ſeen in theſe days, and others have ſeen in the foregoing. And therefore it is vain for any man to expect that ſatisfaction now or in future times, which none have found ſince the World began: Men will always loath things preſent, as they have ever done; and long for thoſe which are a coming, which will ever give them the ſame ſatiety. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 10.

Ver. 10. *Is there* any *thing whereof it may be ſaid, See, this* is *new? it hath been already of old time which was before us.*] Is any man able to contradict this and point us to the thing which is altogether new, and hath never been ſeen or heard of before? It may appear perhaps ſo to him; but that is to be imputed merely to the ſhortneſs of humane life: which makes us ignorant of what hath paſſed in former ages (ſave only in a few things tranſmitted down to us by obſerving men.) For had we continued many Generations, that which now ſeems new and unuſual to us, would have appeared familiar and of great antiquity, as really it is.

Ver. 11. There is *no remembrance of former* things: *neither ſhall there be* any *remembrance of* things *that are to come, with* thoſe *that ſhall come after.*] They that went before us indeed, might have regiſtred ſuch things; but as they obſerved little, ſo they have left the memory of leſs: nor will this age, or thoſe that follow, be more careful; or if they ſhould, Poſterity will be as negligent as former Ages have been, in preſerving thoſe records: For we differ nothing from our Forefathers, nor will the Ages to come excel this in which we live; but ſtill the vanity of man, and of all his projects and contrivances, will continue to the World's end.

Ver. 12. ¶ *I the preacher was king over Iſrael in Jeruſalem.*] And let none imagine that I ſpeak this only as a *Preacher*, in a zealous paſſion, much leſs in a melancholy mood; but remember that I have long ſat upon a Throne, ruling over GOD's own peculiar people, in that City which is the very School of Wiſdom: where I wanted nothing either for the body or the mind; and had both opportunity and ability to make tryal of all things wherein men place their happineſs and therefore may be believed, when I declare nothing but from my own experience. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 13. *And I gave my heart to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom, concerning all* things *that are done under heaven: this ſore travel hath God given to the ſons of men, to be exerciſed therewith.*] And being thus inſtructed with all the helps and aſſiſtances, that the power of ſuch a King could afford, I applied my mind, in the firſt place, and ſet my Wits to work with all imaginable care and diligence, to ſearch into the nature of all Creatures here below; thinking I ſhould be happy, if I could but find out the cauſes, beginnings and progreſs of things; eſpecially the counſels, contrivances and endeavours of Mankind, with the event of all their actions. But, alas! I ſoon found that this was was a tedious buſineſs, in which when I had travelled a great way, I met with ſmall ſatisfaction; nay, found it to be the torture of the mind, unto which GOD hath condemned mankind, as a puniſhment for their vain curioſity, and groſs negligence of heavenly wiſdom. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 14. *I have ſeen all the works that are done under the ſun, and behold all* is *vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*] And having now finiſhed theſe ſtudies, and taken a ſerious view of all that falls within the compaſs of humane knowledge, I cannot ſay that they have given me any ſolid contentment; for we can know but little, and what we do know of natural things doth us ſmall ſervice: it puffs us up indeed like wind, but gives no nouriſhment; it fills us with Notions, but of little or no uſe; and therefore vexes us at laſt, and breaks our heart to conſider that we have ſpent ſo much time and ſo many thoughts, which have even eaten up our ſpirits, to ſo little purpoſe. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 15. That which is *crooked cannot be made ſtraight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbred.*] For as there are inexplicable difficulties in all ſorts of knowledge, of which no man can give an account; ſo, with all our ſtudy, we cannot get skill enough, either to prevent misfortunes, or to remove out of the way that which croſſeth our deſigns, much leſs to alter the nature of things (no, not ſo much as in our own Conſtitutions) nor to redreſs the diſorders in Government: the defects in which, and in all other things and conditions, we are ſo far from being able to ſupply, that we cannot number them; and yet the folly of Mankind repreſents every thing to their deſires, as if it were completely good and wanted nothing to make one happy. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 16. *I communed with mine own heart, Saying, Lo, I am come to great eſtate, and have gotten more wiſdom than all* they *that have been before me in Jeruſalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wiſdom and knowledge.*] I myſelf ſtill perſiſted in my reach after knowledge, though I found it ſo painful and ſo unſatisfactory: thinking within myſelf, that there was this Good at leaſt in it, that it had gotten me a very great Name, and raiſed me ſo high in all mens opinion, that I was noted for the wiſeſt perſon that had ever been in theſe Parts of the World, there being no ſort of knowledge, wherewith my mind was not ſtored in great abundance. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 17. *And I gave my heart to know wiſdom, and to know madneſs and folly: I perceived*

ceived that this alſo is vexation of ſpirit.] And, as the nature of all knowledge is to excite a thirſt after more, this made me apply my mind more earneſtly to comprehend, not only the greateſt, but, the meaneſt matter; to mark, for inſtance, the actions and occupations of madmen and fools, as well as the motions of wiſer perſons: but I perceived, that to be pleaſed merely with fame, was to live upon Air; and it was an afflictive thought to obſerve, how little the moſt of the world (though they thought themſelves very wiſe) differed from Lunaticks and diſtracted Folk. *See* Arg. [*m*].

Ver. 18. *For in much wiſdom is much grief: and he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow.*] So that though knowledge be the moſt excellent of all other, earthly Goods, being the Ornament of the mind which is the beſt part of us, yet this alſo is inſufficient for our happineſs: becauſe, after it hath coſt a man infinite pains (and ſometimes exhauſted his ſpirits, and made him melancholy and moroſe, nay, thrown him into many Diſeaſes) to acquire that little wiſdom he can attain; which raiſes alſo more doubts than it can reſolve, and meets with troubleſome oppoſition from various Opinions that claſh againſt it; it cannot but fill him with indignation to find folly generally applauded more than his wiſdom and grieve his very ſoul to ſee that it is dangerous for a man to know more than his Neighbours; and that he is ſo far from being able to remedy what is amiſs, that he is hated if he endeavour it; and rewarded with reproaches for his care of the publick good. *See* Annot. [*n*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Ver.* 1. The Wiſdom, Vertue and Dignity of an Author making his work more valuable and regarded, *Solomon* or (he who compoſed this Book from what he heard him deliver, or found in his Writings) begins with his Quality; not merely as a King, and as the Son of a Great King, and of a great people, in a famous city; but, which was moſt conſiderable, as a publick Inſtructor, having ability and authority to inform all men where they ſhould find that happineſs, which they ignorantly ſought, but could not meet withal. This he proclaims with a loud voice; deſiring ſerious attention to ſuch a weighty Diſcourſe, and that they would often recollect, as he had done (all which may be the import of the word *Kobeleth* *) how frivolous and trivial, all thoſe things are, which moſt men purſue with the greateſt earneſtneſs.

* See Preface Numb: IV.

[*b*] *V.* 2. This is the Subject of this Book, to ſhew how ſenſeleſs it is to place our happineſs in theſe frail and inconſtant things, that we enjoy upon this earth: which he not only pronounces, but proves to be mere emptineſs. So *Vanity* ſignifies; and what is conſequent upon that, diſſatisfaction, trouble and affliction. See *Pſal.* LXXVIII. 33. And this, beyond what can be expreſſed: for our Tranſlators take it to be a word of the ſame import with *Tohu*; which is uſed in the *Hebrew* language, when they would ſignify that of which they ſpeak, to be ſo trivial, that it is below leſs than nothing, XL. *Iſa.* 17. And yet *Solomon* is not content with this ſingle word, but doubles it to denote the extreme diſſatisfaction he found in all things, which made a ſhow of affording him contentment; but performed nothing of that which they ſeemed to promiſe. So the word *Vanity* is alſo uſed for that which is alſo falſe, lying and deceitful, LXII. *Pſal.* 9. and other places, where *Idols* are called *Vanities*.

[*c*] *V.* 3. Here begins the proof of his Aſſertion; by conſidering *firſt* the mind of man: which runs from one thing to another without any end; but finds no ſatisfaction remaining from all its reſtleſs thoughts. And then the body of man (*v.* 4.) which, as proud and lofty as it now looks, muſt moulder into Duſt; and the pooreſt perſon perhaps ſhall tread upon its grave. For it cannot laſt like the earth, from whence it comes; which ſtands for ever, as a publick Theatre, whereon men enter and act their Part, and then go off and never appear again: and when they go (as ſome prettily rather than ſolidly gloſs upon the words, *The Earth abideth for ever*) they can carry none of it along with them, but leave it all behind them, unto thoſe that come after; who paſs away alſo, leaving the Earth where they found it.

[*d*] *V.* 5. The Sun alſo in a ſettled courſe, obſerves its times of riſing and ſetting: whereas man, when he goes down to the Earth, cannot, like the Sun, come up again. So the *fifth* Verſe ſeems to be moſt naturally connected with the foregoing; and in like manner the *ſixth* and *ſeventh* Verſes are to be expounded. There are many Interpreters indeed, who look upon the things mentioned in theſe three Verſes, only as Emblems of the

the inſtability of all humane Affairs, and of the conſtant revolutions of the ſame miſeries: which cannot be hindered by any humane counſels, but will return after all the changes, whereby we think to mend ourſelves. Upon which ſenſe I have juſt touched in my Paraphraſe, but not followed it; becauſe it doth not ſeem to me to be the ſcope of theſe Verſes. In which man is repreſented, by *four* compariſons with the *Earth*, the *Sun*, the *Wind*, and the *Sea*, to be more ſubject to Vanity than other things.

[e] *V.* 8. Which having thus illuſtrated, he proceeds here more particularly to conſider, what he hath ſaid in general words (*v.* 3.) of man's vain endeavour to ſatisfy himſelf in worldly deſigns and contrivances: in which he is tired, but comes to no end of his deſires. How ſhould he? when his whole buſineſs here is only to do and to enjoy the very ſame things over and over again: as all men have done before us, and ſhall do after us, *v.* 9, 10, 11.

[f] *V.* 9. We may fancy indeed that we have found ſome new thing; but this conceit proceeds merely from our ignorance; as the Lord *Bacon* excellently diſcourſes in his firſt Book of the *Advancement of Learning*, Chap. 8.

"Learning and knowledge, *ſaith he*, takes "away vain and exceſſive admiration; "which is the very root of all weak "counſels. For we admire things, either "becauſe they are *new*, or becauſe they "are *great*. As for *Novelty*, there is no "man that conſiders things thoroughly, but hath this printed in his heart, "*There is nothing new under the Sun:* nor "can an man much admire a Puppet-play, who doth but thruſt his head "behind the Curtain, and ſeeth the "Inſtruments and Wires whereby they "are moved. As for *Greatneſs*, we may "ſay as *Alexander*, who, after his great "Conqueſt in *Aſia*, receiving Letters "of ſome ſmall Fights or Skirmiſhes in "*Greece*, at the taking ſome Bridge or "Fort, was wont to tell his Friends, "that *it ſeemed to him, that they had ſent "him News of the Battles of* Homer's *Frogs "and Mice:* So, certainly, if a man "conſider the Univerſe and the Fabrick of it, to him this Globe of "Earth with the men upon it, and "their buſy motions (excepting always the Divineneſs of Souls) will not "ſeem much more conſiderable than an "*Hillock of Ants, whereon ſome creep up and "down with their Corn, others with their "Eggs, others empty: all about a very little heap of Duſt.*" And as *Melanchon* well obſerves, the ſame deſires, the ſame counſels, the ſame ends, the ſame cauſes of war, and calamitous events, return again: according to that of *Thucydes*, *While human nature continues what it is, the like miſchiefs will happen; ſometimes leſs, ſometimes more direfully.*

[g] *V.* 12. Thus having confirmed his main Propoſitions, by ſuch general Arguments as reach to all things in this world; he proceeds here to a more particular proof of it, from his own proper experience. And deſigning (before he declared his own Opinion of the Chief Good, and by what means it may be attained) to confute the vain fancies of men about it; he reduces them, as I have ſhewn in the Preface, to *four* Heads. And obſerving that ſome place it in *knowledge*, and curious inquiries into all manner of things, others in *pleaſure*, or in *both* theſe together; others in *honour* and power; others in *riches* and heaps of wealth; he begins with that which is the moſt plauſible. And demonſtrates, from the 13th Verſe to the end of this Chapter, how little ſatisfaction is to be found in the mere ſpeculation of things; though a man arrive at the higheſt degree of human knowledge.

[h] *V.* 13, 14. *Melanchon* reſtrains theſe *two* Verſes, to political Wiſdom, in the Government of Kingdoms. Which gives men a double affliction: *firſt*, in that the wiſeſt men often err in their counſels; and *ſecondly*, that events ſometimes do not anſwer to the beſt counſels that men can follow. Examples of the *firſt*, are innumerable: Sometimes they err through ambition, as *Perdiccas*, after *Alexander*; ſometime through a falſe opinion of Right, as *Brutus*; ſometime through over-doing, buſy-headedneſs and inquietude of mind, as *Pericles*; ſometime through anger, as *Marius*. And how many ways good counſels have miſcarried, it is too long here to remember: becauſe it is here farther obſervable, that ſometime mere doubtfulneſs and uncertainty of mind what courſe to take, is as great a torment to the mind as any other. Thus *Pompey* was firſt perplexed in his Counſels, before he ſaw the diſaſtrous event of his Error. To conclude this; all Government is ſo full of cares, perplexities, and impediments, that it made *Demoſthenes* ſay, If he were to begin the World again, he would rather die than be promoted to it. And *Æſchines*, that he was as glad when he was rid of his office, as he would have been to be delivered from a mad Dog.

But this I take to be too ſtrait a ſenſe; though it be agreeable enough to what he

he ſaith *v.* 12. of his Kingly Office: and therefore I have enlarged it farther in my *Paraphraſe*; though *Greg. Nazianzen* alſo ſeems to have a reſpect to it, when he thus interprets this place, *Orat. L. III. p.* 750. *That all things here below are poſſeſſed with an uncouth and execrable ſpirit* (ἀλλοκότου καὶ μυσαρᾶ πνεύματος) *ſo that a man cannot comprehend how abſurdly all humane affairs are managed.*

[i] *V.* 14. The word we tranſlate *vexation* is found only in this Book, and is capable of many ſenſes, all pertinent to the ſcope of this place. For according to the ſeveral Fountains from whence it may be derived; this Phraſe may be interpreted, either *anguiſh* of Spirit, or *breaking* of Spirit, or *preying upon* the Spirits, or (in another ſenſe of the word Spirit) *feeding on the Wind or Air*: none of which I have neglected in the Paraphraſe.

[k] *V.* 15. The ſhortneſs of humane Wit, though never ſo much improved, is here repreſented by two things: *firſt*, that it cannot remove what is inconvenient; *ſecondly*, that it cannot ſupply what is deficient, in any condition of life. Or, as others will have it, the firſt part of the Verſe refers to the inability of man to rectify that *perverſeneſs* (as the *Hebrew* word we tranſlate *crooked* ſignifies) which he finds in himſelf or others; and the latter part, to the ſmall reach of humane underſtanding, which can attain but a very imperfect knowledge, either of *words*, *things*, *times*, *perſons* or *actions*; as ſome branch out the innumerable Particulars of which we muſt be content to be ignorant.

[l] *V.* 16. I have not curiouſly diſtinguiſhed between *Wiſdom* and *Knowledge*, either in this Verſe, or in the 18th. But there may be this difference pertinently made, That *Wiſdom* directs a man, in the practical affairs of life, unto that which is moſt fit for his purpoſe, according to the various circumſtances wherein he may be. It conſiſts chiefly in a clear judgment, to diſcern our true intereſt, and the proper means to compaſs it: together with a preſentneſs of mind, to obviate ſudden accidents. And then *Knowledge* relates to the ſpeculation of natural things; in their cauſes and effects, their properties and differences, and ſuch like things.

[m] V. 17 *Madneſs* and *Folly*, may refer alſo to all the idle Speculations, wherein men of Parts and Wit, ſometimes not only *imploy*, but *applaud* themſelves, as the firſt of thoſe words ſeem to import in the *Hebrew*. This trifling ſort of Knowledge is notably deſcribed by *Eraſmus*, in his *Praiſe of Folly*.

[n] *V.* 18. If there be any difference to be made between *Wiſdom* and *Knowledge*, I have noted it above upon v. 16. As for *grief* and *ſorrow*, they may be thus diſtinguiſhed, That the former, in the Original word, includes in it *indignation*, which is a ſharp *anger* mingled with ſcorn; to find either our Perſons and Counſels contemned, or our Projects and well laid deſigns defeated. Such as was in *Achitophel*; whoſe penetrating Wit made his rage the greater, to ſee his judicious advice rejected, and the whole Conſpiracy utterly diſappointed. The *other* word (ſorrow) properly denotes an extreme great trouble and ſickneſs of mind; and is ſometimes applied to pains in the Body: which is the effect too frequently of overhard ſtudy. *Melanthon* underſtands the whole Verſe (as he did v. 13, 14.) of the trouble that wiſe men have, when they are intruſted with Government, to ſee the confuſions, errors, vices and calamities of Mankind. And their Afflictions are the greater, becauſe they are not only more ſenſible than other men of preſent evils, but foreſee by the preſent thoſe that are future: and therefore are tormented with a ſore pain and grief, both for what they feel and for what they fear. For they know, that from the firſt diſorders, there commonly follow greater confuſions: as when *Pericles* had once ſtirred up a War, there followed the deſtruction of almoſt all the great Cities of *Greece*. And it is too truly ſaid by *Pindar*, That *it is eaſie for any Body to diſturb a City; but God alone can reſtore peace unto it.*

This I take to be too limited a ſenſe; but it is no ſmall trouble to a wiſe and prudent perſon, as *Corranus* excellently expreſſes it, to behold the miſerable diſorders and confuſions of humane affairs. For how is it poſſible to avoid it, nay, how can a man chuſe but be filled with Indignation, too ſee Juſtice, Equity, Probity, Fidelity, Integrity and Conſtancy, and all other ſuch like Vertues ſlighted and diſregarded by mankind; and on the contrary, Injuſtice, Baſeneſs, Perfidiouſneſs, Flattery, and ſuch like Vices, poſſeſs the World, and carry all before them? Or what man can, without vexation, obſerve the prepoſterous judgment of mankind, which magnifies thoſe things, that are not only vain but hurtful and pernicious; and not only contemn but hate thoſe things, which are truly good for them; nay, alone deſirable: No man can either be wiſe alone to himſelf, in ſuch a multitude of Fools and mad-men, without the greateſt grief and indignation: nor can he accommodate himſelf, with an equal mind, to the dotages

dotages of the common people; when he ſees that which is better.

I ſhall conclude this Chapter with the Lord *Bacon*'s Obſervation, concerning this anxiety of ſpirit which ariſeth out of Knowledge; in the beginning of his Book of the *Advancement of Learning*.

"*Solomon*, ſaith he, doth not paſs this "cenſure abſolutely upon Wiſdom and "Knowledge, but only ſets forth the "true bounds, wherein humane know-"ledge is to be circumſcribed: which if "we do not obſerve, it will prove very "troubleſome to us and others. And "thoſe limitations are *three*. *Firſt*, That "we do not ſo place our felicity in "Knowledge, as to forget our morta-"lity. *Secondly*, That we uſe not our "Knowledge to beget anxiety, but "repoſe and contentment of mind: "And *Thirdly*, That we do not pre-"ſume by the contemplation of Nature, "to think ourſelves able to comprehend "the Myſteries of God. The firſt and "the laſt of theſe are plain enough; "and therefore I ſhall only note what "he ſaith of the *ſecond*: that it is cer-"tain, no anxiety or perturbation of "mind ariſeth from Knowledge, but "by mere accident. For all Know-"ledge, and Admiration (which is the "Seed of Knowledge) is pleaſant in "itſelf: but when we fall to frame "Concluſions from thence, which ob-"liquely applied to our own affairs, "beget either *weak fears*, or *immoderate "deſires*, then ariſeth that torment and "trouble of mind, whereof *Solomon* "here ſpeaketh. For then Knowledge "is no longer *dry light* (which *Heraclitus* "was wont to ſay was the beſt) but "*moiſt light*, ſteeped and infuſed in the "humours of the affections."

As for that Expoſition which ſome have given of thoſe words, that *he increaſeth the number of his ſtripes (or wounds) who increaſeth knowledge*; and maketh no uſe of it, nor takes care that his obedience riſe in ſome good proportion with it; it is not the proper ſenſe of the place, but rather an accommodation of the words to another profitable purpoſe.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

Having paſſed his cenſure upon the firſt *way men take to find ſatisfaction mentioned in the Notes upon* V. 12. *of the firſt Chapter) which without all contradiction is the chief, and the beſt of the* four; *he proceeds here to conſider the* ſecond, *which is the more common: moſt men immerſing themſelves in pleaſure, as their higheſt Good. Of which he was more capable to judge, than any other man; becauſe he denied himſelf no delights that he deſired, and yet did not plunge himſelf wholly into them, but with a mixture of Wiſdom, as he tells us,* V. 3. *Whereby he ſoon perceived that they who leave the purſuit of Knowledge for the ſake of bodily pleaſure, change for the worſe: For after he had tried all ſorts of things that could give him any pleaſure, he went back to Wiſdom and Knowledge, as the better of the two,* V. 12. *And, yet after he had conſidered that again the ſecond time, he could not but confeſs, that there were ſuch great imperfections in it; that it could not make a man happy, as he diſcourſes in the following Verſes. Of which I ſhall give a more particular account in the* Annotations.

Ver. 1. I *Said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleaſure: and behold, this alſo is vanity.*] Being thus diſappointed therefore in the expectations I had of happineſs from much *Wiſdom* and *Knowledge*, and beholding many men look jollily who had none at all, I reſolved to leave off thoſe troubleſome cares and labours, and to follow my pleaſures: ſaying to myſelf, Why doſt thou vex and torment thy mind to no purpoſe? Let alone theſe crabbed ſtudies, which haſten old-age, and indulge thyſelf in all thoſe ſweet delights which Youth deſires: Try what ſatisfaction mirth and joy can give thee; and for that end take no thought for the future, but enjoy to the heighth the preſent Goods of this life: Which accordingly I did; but believe me, though this promiſed much at firſt, it performed little, but left me more void of contentment than it found me. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *I ſaid of Laughter,* It is *mad: and of mirth, What doth it?*] For the noiſe, the tumult, the indecent motions, and and ſcurrilous jeſtings, of men that let themſelves looſe to exceſſive laughter, and extravagant merriment, appeared to me like diſtraction of mind: and conſidering how unprofitable it is, I could not but with a paſſionate diſdain put it from me; ſaying of it, and of mirth, and dancing, and all the frolickneſs of mankind, What is there in it, that thus bewitcheth them? Where lies the pleaſure, that thus inchants them, and puts them ſo beſides themſelves; that they think neither of God, nor of any thing elſe that is worthy of them, but of this alone? *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *I ſought in mine heart to give my ſelf unto wine* [*yet acquainting mine heart with wiſdom*] *and to lay hold on folly, till I might ſee what* was *that good for the ſons of men, which they ſhould do under the heaven, all the days of their life.*] I deliberated therefore with myſelf about a middle courſe of Life; which ſhould neither be altogether ſtudious, nor altogether voluptuous, but a mixture of both, and in purſuance of this counſel entertained myſelf freely, with all the delights of feaſting and banquetting; yet ſo, as not to loſe my acquaintance with Wiſdom, but to keep my mind ſo intent upon it, that Folly might not have its full ſwing; but find a check upon it, till I might make a ſufficient tryal, whether herein lay, that ſo much deſired Good which men ſhould propoſe to themſelves, and proſecute all the time of their ſtay in this world. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *I made me great works, I builded me houſes, I planted me vineyards.*] For which end I raiſed with exquiſite Art, the moſt ſtately and magnificent works that could be contrived, for the pleaſure of all the ſenſes; As firſt of all, I built myſelf a moſt magnificent Palace, and other goodly Houſes; which when I had elegantly adorned and ſumptuouſly furniſhed, I proceeded to plant about them, in a beautiful order, the choiceſt vines (VIII. *Cant.* 11.) which, beſides the fragrant ſmell (II. *Cant.* 13.) and the lovely ſight, wherewith they entertained me abroad, afforded the moſt generous wines for my table at home. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all* kind of *fruits.*] To which I added delicious Gardens, full of various Flowers, Herbs and Plants for all the Seaſons of the Year; and then ſpacious Foreſts and Parks, or rather Paradiſes of Pleaſure, wherein, beſides other delights, were lovely Shades and Coverts for all ſorts of Beaſts: nor were Orchards wanting ſtored with all kinds of Fruit-trees, which either this, or other Countries could afford. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*] And that nothing might be wanting to the perfection or preſervation of theſe places. I made with great charge, and no leſs Art, either Fountains, or Ciſterns, or Pools of water: not only for delight and for Fiſh, but to ſerve inſtead of Rain; to water the Flowers and Herbs, eſpecially the young Nurſeries of Trees; that they might not die with Drought. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *I got me ſervants and maidens, and had ſervants born in my houſe; alſo I had great poſſeſſions of great and ſmall cattel, above all that were in Jeruſalem before me.*] All which requiring the care of a great many perſons, I purchaſed Servants both men and women, in great abundance; of whom I had a multitude of Children born in my houſe, whom I employed in looking after my other poſſeſſions, which I had in Herds and Flocks of greater and leſſer Cattel: which were ſo numerous, that I killed every day for my Family ten Oxen crammed in the Stalls, and twenty Oxen out of the paſtures, with an hundred Sheep (beſides, Harts, and Roe-Bucks, and Fallow-Deer, and fatted Fowl, to ſay nothing of other proviſion, 1 *Kings* IV. 22, 23.) and yet ſuch was the plenty, my Stock did not decreaſe, becauſe a new Brood grew up continually, in ſuch abundance, as the like had never been ſeen in our Country, before my days. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *I gathered me alſo ſilver and gold, and the peculiar treaſure of kings and of the provinces: I got me men-ſingers and women-ſingers, and the delights of the ſons of men,* as *muſical inſtruments, and that of all ſorts.*] By which and divers other means (1 *Kin.* IV. 21. X. 21, 22, 23, *&c.* 2 *Chron.* IX. 24.) I laid up vaſt treaſures of Silver and Gold and Jewels, and all that was choice and precious in other Kingdoms; eſpecially in thoſe Provinces, which were ſubject unto me, which were great and many (1 *Kin.* IV. 24.) out of whom I picked out alſo the ſweeteſt voices that could be found, both of men and women; together with the rareſt ſongs and Hymns, compoſed by the beſt Maſters in the world; and all ſorts of Inſtruments of Muſick: than which nothing is more charming among the Children of men, either to lay them aſleep when they would go to reſt, or to recreate their ſpirits when they are tired with buſineſs; to baniſh melancholy when they are oppreſſed with ſorrow, and to augment their pleaſure when they would be merry: being no leſs fit to wait upon Feaſts, than they that attend at the Table. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 9. *So I was great and increaſed more than all that were before me in Jeruſalem; alſo my wiſdom remained with me.*] Thus I was not only great in place, and power, and riches, but by ſuch means as theſe, added ſplendor alſo to my greatneſs, and made it more conſpicuous and illuſtrious: and (which is ſtill more glorious) I was not greater in any thing than in Wiſdom; which was not undermined by all theſe pleaſures, but, when they were in danger to dethrone my Reaſon, this ſettled it again in its former State and Authority. *See* Annot [*i*].

Ver. 10. *And whatſoever mine eyes deſired, I kept not from them, I with-held not my heart from any joy: for my heart rejoyced in all my labour, and this was my portion of all*

my labour.] And on the other ſide, my Wiſdom did not lay ſuch reſtraints upon me, but that I took the liberty to pleaſe my eyes, and all my ſenſes, with every thing that fell within the wide compaſs of their deſires: It did not deny me any joy to which I had a mind; but taught me rather to reap this as the ſweet fruit of all my labours: there being nothing (it ſhewed me) that came to my ſhare of all that I had gotten with ſo much care and diligence, but only the free enjoyment of it; without which I had as good have been without it. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold, all* was *vanity and vexation of ſpirit, and* there was *no profit under the Sun.*] But then, after I had conſidered ſeriouſly, how ſmall a thing this pleaſure was, how ſhort, and how often interrupted, and laid in the balance againſt it, all the time I had ſpent and the pains I had taken, in contriving theſe magnificent Buildings, Gardens, Paradiſes, and all the reſt; it ſeemed to me as nothing: and I cannot but leave this Obſervation behind me, That all this is empty and unſatisfying to the Spirit of man; and there is alſo much vexation and torment in it, to ſee how croſs things go, many times, to our deſires, how negligent they are who ſhould look after ſuch great works as mine were; but eſpecially in this, that a man can reap ſo little benefit and ſo tranſient, from ſuch vaſt and long labours, *Chap.* I. *v.* 3, 14. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. *And I turned myſelf to behold wiſdom, and madneſs, and folly: for what* can *the man* do, *that cometh after the king?* even *that which hath been already done.*] Wherefore I began to reflect upon my former thoughts, and to turn them back again towards Wiſdom, as the only Good of man (*Chap.* I. 13, 17.) and eſpecially that Wiſdom which moderates our pleaſures, and keeps them from running into madneſs and folly (and who is there that can give a better account of this than I? who have had ſuch advantages above any private man to know the hiſtory of former times, as well as of my own; that I am confident, they who come after can paſs no other judgment upon things, than I do now.)

Ver. 13. *Then I ſaw that wiſdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkneſs.*] For I clearly diſcerned, that there is as wide a difference between Wiſdom and Folly; as there is between the light of the Sun, which beautifies the whole world, and ſhews all things diſtinctly to us; and the darkneſs of the Night, which wraps up all in diſmal confuſion, and hides even our dangers from us.

Ver. 14. *The wiſe man's eyes* are *in his head, but the fool walketh in darkneſs: and I myſelf perceived alſo, that one event happeneth to them all.*] Whence it is, that a Wiſe man, having this light in his mind, looks before him, and round about him; which makes him cautious and well aware of dangers, into which a blundering Fool, whoſe mind is blinded with the ſottiſh love of pleaſure, falls raſhly and inconſiderately: And yet with all his circumſpection (ſo imperfect are all things here, in which we place our happineſs) the wiſeſt man is not able to avoid a great many calamities, which are common to the whole race of mankind.

Ver. 15. *Then ſaid I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, ſo it happeneth even to me; and why was I then* more *wiſe? Then I ſaid in my heart, that this alſo* is *vanity.*] Which reflection made me ſigh, and think with myſelf; if notwithſtanding this excellence of Wiſdom above Folly, the very ſame Diſeaſes, loſs of Children and Friends, and innumerable Caſualties, happen unto me, even unto me who know ſo much, that there do unto a Fool; to what purpoſe have I taken all this pains, and ſtudied ſo hard to be wiſer than he? and upon this review of all that Wiſdom can, and cannot do for us, I concluded again the ſecond time, that there is a Vanity alſo in this; which makes it uncapable of giving us full ſatisfaction. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 16. *For* there is *no remembrance of the wiſe more than of the fool for ever; ſeeing that which now* is, *in the days to come ſhall be forgotten: and how dieth the wiſe* man? *as the fool.*] For as both wiſe and fooliſh are alike ſubject unto death, ſo, when they are dead, their names live not long after them, but they and all their famous atchievements are forgotten; there being few of thoſe things which are now done, that will be ſo much as thought of in the next Generation; much leſs in future Ages, when the memory of them will be utterly loſt, and cannot be recovered: and is not this a lamentable Caſe, that a Wiſe man, hath no more privilege than a Fool, either from Death, or, from its inſeparable Companion, Oblivion? *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 17. *Therefore I hated life, becauſe the work that is wrought under the ſun* is *grievous unto me: for all* is *vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*] This put me quite out of love with life, becauſe the toil and labour of it is ſo great and grievous; and the pleaſure it yields, either interrupted and ſpoiled by many unforeſeen accidents, or quite taken away by Death, which leaves no footſteps of us behind us: for nothing is conſtant or of long continuance, nothing

ſolid,

ſolid, nothing ſatisfactory here, but all our enjoyments leave us as empty, as he that feeds only upon the Wind; nay, it torments us to ſee that we muſt take great pains too, for ſuch weak and fading things, *Chap.* I. 14.

Ver. 18. ¶ *Yea I hated all my labour which I had taken under the ſun: becauſe I ſhould leave it unto the man that ſhall be after me.*] And beſides all this, there are other Reaſons which made me deſpiſe all thoſe goodly Structures which I had erected, and thoſe beautiful works which I had contrived, (*v.* 4, 5, 6, *&c.*) becauſe, as I cannot keep them long myſelf, ſo I muſt leave them to I know not whom, to a Stranger, perhaps, who without any pains of his, enjoys the fruit of all my labour.

Ver. 19. *And who knoweth whether he ſhall be a wiſe* man, *or a fool? yet ſhall he have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have ſhewed myſelf wiſe under the ſun. This* is *alſo vanity.*] Or if my Son ſucceed me in the poſſeſſion of them, there is no man can aſſure me, whether he will wiſely preſerve and improve what I have gotten, or fooliſhly ſquander all away; in ſhort, whether he will prove a worthy or an unworthy Inheritor of my labours: And yet, ſuch as he is, he muſt have an abſolute power over all that I leave, to diſpoſe of it as he pleaſeth; and ſottiſhly perhaps to waſte in a little time, what I with prudent care and diligence, have been heaping up all my life long. This is a great addition to humane miſery; and renders even the Study of Wiſdom very vain, which cannot find a remedy for theſe evils.

Ver. 20. *Therefore I went about to cauſe my heart to deſpair of all the labour which I took under the ſun.*] Which are ſo great; that, inſtead of purſuing my deſigns for this World, I turned my thoughts the quite contrary way; and, like one perfectly tired, I concluded it beſt to leave off all farther cares about any thing here; deſpairing to reap any ſatisfaction from all my labours; particularly, to attain any certainty what kind of man he will be who ſhall inherit them.

Ver. 21. *For there is a man whoſe labour* is *in wiſdom, and in knowledge, and in equity: yet to a man that hath not laboured therein, ſhall he leave it* for *his portion. This alſo* is *vanity, and a great evil.*] For what hath happened to others may to me; who have obſerved a man no way defective, either in wiſe contrivance, or prudent management, or upright dealing, but as eminent for honeſty, as he was for diligence; whoſe eſtate fell to the ſhare of an idle perſon, nay, of an ignorant, ſilly, unjuſt and ungrateful wretch; who prodigally conſumed upon his luſts, that which coſt him no pains, not ſo much as a thought to acquire. This likewiſe it cannot be denied is not only a diſſatisfaction, but a torment, nay, a great torment, to the mind of man.

Ver. 22. *For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart wherein he hath laboured under the ſun?*] Who may well ſay, To what purpoſe is all this toil of my Body, and theſe ſolicitous thoughts and anguiſh of my mind? For all that a man can enjoy himſelf of the anxious labours wherein he ſpends his days, amounts to little or nothing; and what comfort hath he in thinking who ſhall enjoy the fruit of them hereafter?

Ver. 23. *For all his days* are *ſorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh not reſt in the night. This is alſo vanity.*] And yet, ſuch is our folly, there is no end of our cares; for we ſee many a man whoſe life is nothing but a mere drudgery; who never is at leiſure to enjoy any thing that he hath, but ſtill engaged in one troubleſome employment or other to get more: which he follows ſo eagerly, as if it were his buſineſs to diſquiet and vex himſelf, and make his life uneaſy to him; being not content with his daily toils, unleſs he rack his mind alſo with cares in the night, which invites him to take ſome reſt. This is ſo void of all reaſon, that nothing can be imagined more vain and fooliſh.

Ver. 24. ¶ There is *nothing better for a man,* than *that he ſhould eat and drink, and* that *he ſhould make his ſoul enjoy good in his labour. This alſo I ſaw, that it* was *from the hand of God.*] Nor can any man reap the benefit of his labours, but by ſtudying firſt to free his mind from over much care and anxious thoughts: and then (inſtead of heaping up perpetually for his Heirs) by allowing himſelf a moderate and decent uſe, of all that he hath gotten by his honeſt labours; cheerfully communicating them with his friends and neighbours; and laſtly (in order to theſe) by being truly and devoutly religious, acknowledging GOD to be the Donor of all good things: from whoſe bountiful Hand proceeds even this power, both to enjoy all a man hath with a quiet, peaceable, and well-pleaſed mind, in the midſt of all the troubles of this life; and, in concluſion, to leave all with the like mind, unto thoſe that ſhall come after him.

Ver. 25. *For who can eat, or who elſe can haſten* hereunto *more than I?*] For the truth of which, you may rely upon my experience; who, when I could have hoarded up as much as any other man, choſe rather freely to enjoy the fruit of my labours; and was as forward to ſpend,

as

as ever I was to get: but muſt acknowledge this to be the ſingular Grace of GOD to me; who preſerved me from that great folly of neglecting myſelf, for the ſake of I know not whom.

Ver. 26. *For* God *giveth to a man that is good in his ſight, wiſdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the ſinner he giveth travel, to gather, and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This is alſo vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*] For this is a bleſſing which GOD reſerves for him whom he loves; whoſe ſincere piety he rewards, with Wiſdom to judge when, and with Knowledge to underſtand how, he ſhould enjoy, and take the comfort of, all that he hath; eſpecially with inward joy, ſatisfaction of heart, and tranquility of mind, in this favour of GOD to him; whereby the troubleſome affairs of this life are tempered and ſeaſoned: but he delivers up him that regards not GOD, to the moſt cruel Tormentors, which are his own unſatiable deſires, and anxious cares, with buſy labours and inceſſant pains, to increaſe his Eſtate without end, and to heap up vaſt Treaſures, which GOD diſpoſes afterward to thoſe who approve themſelves to Him, in a pious, juſt, and charitable life, with contented minds.

Now what a vanity and vexation is this alſo to a Sinner, to get Riches for thoſe to whom he never deſigned them? Nay, it is a ſad thought to a good man that if his Son be not vertuous, the Eſtate he leaves is not likely to proſper with him. *See* Annot. [*o*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1. Thus *Themiſtocles*, *Lucullus* and others (as *Melanchthon* obſerves) being wearied in their attendance upon publick affairs, by many unprofitable contentions, nay, by the ingratitude of the people, delivered up themſelves unto pleaſures; as better than their ill beſtowed pains.

[*b*] *V.* 2. *Laughter.*] The cenſure he paſſes upon this makes it neceſſary to expound it of ſuch diſſolute and frantick mirth, as I have mentioned in the *Paraphraſe.*

[*c*] *V.* 3. *gave myſelf*] The word in the *Hebrew*) as the Margin of our Tranſlation informs the Reader) imports ſomething of *extenſion*; as in other places of Scripture, *Pſal.* XXXVI. 10. becauſe when men indulge themſelves very liberally in eating and drinking, the blood boils and riſes, the Veins ſwell, and the Skin of the whole Body is diſtended.

Lay hold on] The word ſignifies not ſimply to apprehend; but to keep under reſtraint what we have ſeized. As the *Philiſtines* are ſaid to have *taken* David (had him in their power) in *Gath*; in the Title of *Pſal. LVI.* Thus I have expounded it here, as moſt agreeable to the ſenſe of the place.

[*d*] *V.* 4. *great works*] includes all that follows, to the end of *v.* 8. conſiſting either in Buildings, or in Plantations, and Water-works belonging to them, or in his Houſhold; or his Stock upon his Land; or his Exchequer, and Magazines; or in things that were for mere ſtate and magnificence, *viz.* Royal Furniture; or in great variety of vocal and inſtrumental Muſick; to which ſome add, a kind of *Seraglio* of the moſt beautiful Women that could be found: though for this laſt there is no ground to think it here mentioned; but what lies in two hard words, of which I ſhall give an account preſently.

[*e*] *V.* 5. *gardens*] The *Hebrew* word *Gennoth* ſome will have it to be properly places for *Flowers*, *Herbs*, *Sallets*, and all manner of *Fruit-Trees*: and *Pardeſin*, which we tranſlate *Orchards*, to be only *Woods*, *Foreſts* or *Parks*. Of which there is no certainty; for this laſt word *Pardeſin* is uſed but twice more in the Holy Scripture; and in the firſt of thoſe places, we tranſlate it *Foreſts*, *Nehem. II.* 8. and in the other, *Cant. IV.* 13. it ſignifies a place where Pomegranates grew. And therefore it indifferently ſignifying either of theſe, I have expreſſed both in the *Paraphraſe.* And, if we judge of ſuch places by what the *Greeks* (from this word) call a *Paradiſe*, they were ſo large as to comprehend not only all ſorts of Trees, both Fruit-Trees and others (ſuch as Cedars, Cypreſs, *&c.*) but *Fountains*, and *Fiſh-Ponds*, and *Aviaries*, and *Walks*, for all kind of Beaſts, both wild and tame: in ſhort, whatſoever could make a place pleaſant, either by Nature or Art.

[*f*] *V.* 6. *pools*] The word *Berecoth* carrying in it the Notion of *Bleſſing*, ſome Interpreters will have it to ſignify, places filled and ſupplied by the great *Bleſſing* of Rain. But there is no reaſon for this limitation, it being as capable to ſignify any Lake, or large hollowneſs in the Ground, or upon it, for the reception of Water, either from the Clouds, or from Springs, or from Rivers: which are beneficial for ſundry uſes, as I have expreſſed it in the *Paraphraſe.*

[*g*] *V.* 7. Though the word *Bakar* properly belong to Oxen and Cows; yet we well tranſlate it, the *greater ſort of Cattel*, comprehending Camels, Aſſes, *&c.* In like manner *Tzon* is commonly uſed for Sheep, but comprehends Goats alſo; and therefore is well tranſlated by us, the *leſſer ſort of Cattel.* All which both great and ſmall are comprehended under the general word *Mikneh*, which we tranſlate *Poſſeſſion.*

[*h*] *V.* 8. *peculiar treaſure*] The word *Segullah* ſignifies either the *things* themſelves that are

are rare and precious; or the *place* where ſuch things are repoſited and kept, *viz.* a *Treaſury*.

But the greateſt difficulty in this Verſe, and indeed in this Chapter, is to tell what is meant by *Siddah* and *Siddoth*; which he calls in the Concluſion of this Deſcription of his Magnificence, *the delights*, or delicious pleaſures *of the Sons of men*. Theſe *Bochartus* hath probably conjectured to be moſt excellent Compoſitions in Muſick, or moſt elegant Verſes, ſet by a rare Artiſt among the *Phœnicians*, called *Sido*, to the moſt raviſhing and melting Notes. And therefore I have not ſo much as taken notice of their Interpretation, who deriving theſe words from an Original ſignifying ſpoil and devaſtation, underſtand hereby *beautiful Women*, taken captive in the Wars: of which the King had the firſt choice, as he had of the reſt of ſpoil. For there were no Wars in his time, till the latter end of his reign; and then he was rather worſted, than victorious. Some indeed, to keep this ſenſe, derive it from *Saddaim* the Breaſts or Paps; becauſe no ſmall part of Womens beauty (which they would have to be the *delights* here ſpoken of; conſiſts in the fine ſhape and decent poſition of this part of their Body. But this ſeems to be far fetched; and therefore I have let it, and divers other Interpretations, alone: and only expreſſed the ſenſe of our own tranſlation, which takes theſe for *Muſical Inſtruments*; and and thoſe of ſuch extraordinary ſweetneſs, that they left no part of a man's ſoul untouched, nor room for any other pleaſnre (ſo ſome derive it, from a word ſignifying *abundance*) and had ſome regard to the LXX. who underſtand it of ſuch as waited upon him at the Table (*Cupbearers*, and ſuch like Officers) where Muſick alſo was ſeldom wanting, but made a part of the entertainment of great perſons; as I have expreſſed it in the *Paraphraſe*.

[*i*] *V.* 9. *my wiſdom remained*] For it was not the manner of Great men, in ancient time, to paſs their Feaſts only in eating and drinking, and after the ſottiſh Cuſtom now, to ſend the Cups going round, when all was taken away; but to ſpend the time in pleaſant, but learned, Diſcourſes, or in telling Stories, or propounding and reſolving Queſtions; which might whet the Wit, and form mens manners, or open the Secrets of Nature; and at the ſame time both refreſh and inſtruct the mind. As we ſee at *Sampſon's* Marriage-Feaſt, he propounded a Riddle to be unfolded, concerning the Generation of Bees, out of the Carkaſe of a Lyon. In *Plutarch's Sympoſiacks*, there are abundance of ſuch merry, and learned Queſtions reſolved. And *Athenæus* in his *Diepnoſophiſts*, hath excerpt the Flower of all Arts, and Authors, Poets, Philoſophers, and Hiſtorians; in *Virgil* alſo at the end of his firſt Book of *Æneids*, *Jopas* is introduced ſinging a Philoſophical Song (at the Feaſt which *Dido* made) concerning the Motions of the Moon and the Sun, and in ſhort of all that *Atlas*, that moſt famous Aſtronomer, had taught. And in another place, *Æneas* himſelf relates the Deſtruction of *Troy*.

[*k*] *V.* 10. *my portion*] Though Wiſdom thus bridled his pleaſures, yet it did not reſtrain him from ſuch a free and plentiful enjoyment of them, that there was no ſort which he did not taſte as highly of, as was poſſible; without making himſelf a mere Fool. This he calls *his portion* by a Metaphor taken from Inheritance; which being divided into parts, every one of the Children had his part given him; or from *Lots*, which as they were uſed among Merchants, ſo ſometimes in the dividing of Inheritances: when the Heirs could not agree among themſelves, about the equality of the *portions* which were ſet out for them.

[*l*] *V.* 11. *I looked*] Having conſidered the value of this *portion*, he could not ſay it was much worth; but rather that there was very little in it: and therefore he here prefers Wiſdom much before all this pleaſure: and ſtill far more before ſottiſh and mad pleaſure, *v.* 12.

And yet for all that, after he had taken the benefits of Wiſdom into a ſecond conſideration, *v.* 13, 14. he could not but conclude again, that there is a *Vanity* in that alſo. Which is threefold; as there are three ends for which men ſtudy Wiſdom. *Firſt*, That they may provide for their ſafety and ſecurity: *Secondly*, That they may commend their Names to Poſterity: Or, *Thirdly*, That they may leave to their Children, what their ſingular Prudence, and great Diligence hath gathered together. But all theſe he ſhews are vain Deſigns.

[*m*] *V.* 15. *happed*] For inſtance, he repreſents here, how all Mankind, Wiſe and Fools, are alike liable to the ſame caſualties, and many inconveniences, which are common to every one of us in this life. Which the Lord *Bacon* (in Book IV. of the *Advancement of Learning*, Chap. II.) extends to ſuch Conſiderations as this; That "in all times, Witches and "old Women, and Impoſtors have been "Rivals and Competitors, in the repu-"tation and opinion of the multitude, "with the ableſt Phyſicians; and con-"tended with them for the ſame Cures. "Nay, the Impoſtor bears away the "prize, and Vertue lies under the cen-"ſure, ſuch is the weakneſs and credu-"lity of men they prefer a Mountebank, "or a Witch, before a learned Phyſi-"cian;

" cian: which the Poets obſerved when " they made *Æſculapius* and *Circe*, Bro- " ther and Siſter; both Children of the " *Sun*. And what follows from hence, " but that Phyſicians ſay to themſelves, as " *Solomon* in another caſe, *It befalls to me, " as it doth to the Fool; why ſhould I labour to " be more wiſe!* It diſcourages them, that " is, in their Profeſſion."

[n] *V.* 16. *no remembrance.*] And then for the other two (mentioned above, *k*) he obſerves how ſhort-lived our memorial is, as well as ourſelves, *v.* 16, 17. and that no man can be ſure, who ſhall inherit his labours, or what kind of perſon he ſhall be; wiſe or ſottiſh, good or bad, *v.* 18, 19. Which he reflects upon again in the following Verſes, with a very heavy heart, that made him weary of life, *v.* 20, 21. And then concludes the Chapter, with a brief account of the true way to enjoy all the happineſs that this World can afford: of which we are utterly uncapable, unleſs we have a ſenſe of GOD, be devoutly affected towards Him as the Author and Donor of all good things. Which I have expreſſed ſo fully in the *Paraphraſe*, of *verſe* 24, *&c.* that I may be cenſured for making it too long; and therefore ſhall not commit another error, in enlarging it fartheer here.

[o] *V.* 26. But only obſerve, that *Wiſdom* and *Knowledge* in this Verſe, do not differ, as they may be thought to do, *Chap.* I. *v.* 26. but relate, both of them, to the ſame thing; only with ſuch a diſtinction, as I have mentioned in the *Paraphraſe*: or, as, others will have it, *Wiſdom* relates to the acquiſition of the good things of this World, *Knowledge* to the uſe; from which prudent fruition flows the *joy* he mentions together with them. Thus *Corranus*.

The laſt words of the Chapter, are referred by all Expoſitors, in a manner, only to the condition of the *Sinner*, which immediately precedes: but ſince they have a true ſenſe, with reſpect to all men whatſoever, good and bad, I thought it beſt ſo to expound them; with regard to the whole foregoing Verſe.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Upon the mention of God's over-ruling Providence, in the latter end of the foregoing Chapter, Solomon *proceeds from thence to illuſtrate (in the firſt part of this Chapter, both thoſe things, of which he had diſcourſed before,* viz. *firſt, the* imperfection *of human Wiſdom; which is confined to a certain time or ſeaſon, for all things that it would effect: which if we neglect, or let ſlip, all our contrivance ſignifies nothing. And* ſecondly, *That the utmoſt* perfection *at which our Wiſdom can arrive in this World, conſiſts in theſe things.* Firſt, *In being contented with this order wherein God hath placed all things, and not diſquieting ourſelves about that which it is not in our power to remedy, or alter; at leaſt, not for the preſent.* Secondly, *In obſerving and taking the fitteſt opportunity of doing every thing; as the moſt certain means to tranquillity: there being nothing that makes our mind more unquiet, than ſtriving againſt the ſtream (as we ſpeak) and when the wind is againſt us, labouring to bring about our ends, and to obtain our deſires: And* Thirdly, *In taking the comfort of what we have at preſent; and making a ſeaſonable and legitimate uſe of it: And* Laſtly, *In bearing the viciſſitudes that we find in all human things, with an equal mind; becauſe they are neceſſary and unalterable.*

Theſe were the things he had ſuggeſted in the Concluſion of the former Chapter; and the beginning of this may have relation to every one of them. And ſince he had ſpoken before alſo (v. 9, 10. *of the* ſecond Chapter) *concerning the moderating of pleaſures by Wiſdom, and of the ſtudy of Wiſdom by ſeaſonable pleaſures; I do not know but he may have reſpect unto that alſo: and therefore I have begun with it, in the* Paraphraſe.

Caſtalio *goes ſtill farther, and thinks the meaning of the firſt part of this Chapter may be, that is in vain to expect our happineſs in this World: for this is no more the time, and the place for it, than Seed-time is the Harveſt. But we muſt ſtay till the next life for it: which is the proper time for complete happineſs: here we muſt be content with a great many tears. Which is a pious Meditation, but ſeems not to be the Scope of* Solomon; *and therefore I have not touched upon it.*

In ſhort, he ſtill continues to enlarge himſelf upon the two *firſt things, wherein men place their happineſs;* Wiſdom *and* Pleaſure: *and comes not to the* third, *till the middle of this Chapter; where I ſhall obſerve it.*

Ver. 1. TO *every* thing there is *a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under the heaven.*] How vain an attempt it is, to obtain the fore-named tranquillity by fixing our mind upon any one thing in this World; and how neceſſary it is, to let the ſtudy of Wiſdom, for inſtance, and the enjoyment of pleaſure, labour and reſt, take their turns GOD himſelf hath ſhown us, by tying us to this order in the courſe of things: which, whether they be natural, or depend upon our will, will have their certain appointed ſeaſons and occaſions; upon which all our deſigns, counſels and endeavours

deavours have ſuch a dependance, that if we will not obſerve them, we ſhall not only loſe our labour, but miſerably vex and torment ourſelves to no purpoſe. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *A time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up* that which is *planted*:] As for natural things we ſee in ourſelves that there is a ſtated time for an Infant's lying in the Womb, before it can be born; and the time afterward for its growth, and ſtay in the World; beyond which a man cannot go, but drops into his Grave: And ſo it is not only with other living Creatures as well as man, but with Herbs, and Roots, and Plants, which we cannot ſet and ſow at all times; but muſt take the proper Seaſon both for that, and for gathering the Crop, when it is come to maturity, or elſe our pains are ill beſtowed, and we find to our ſorrow that we have laboured in vain.

Ver. 3. *A time to kill, and a time to heal: a time to break down, and a time to build up.*] And thus it is in the Diſeaſes of our Body; there is a time when they are ſo infectious, that they are incurable, or when it is ſo improper to adminiſter Phyſick, that it doth no good, but certainly kills; whereas at another time, thoſe very remedies prove effectual means, to reſtore our health unto us: And ſo it is in other Structures, as well as our own Bodies; there is a time when it is more proper to break down a building, than it is to raiſe it; and when Houſes are built, there are ſeaſons for repairs, and ſometimes for pulling them down and erecting them anew, or elſe they will not ſtand. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 4. *A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance:*] Other alterations, alſo there are in humane life, which ſometimes naturally move our tears; and at another time our laughter: nay, there are times not only for tears, but for the bittereſt lamentations, which the Funerals of our deareſt Relations, or the publick Calamities require; and again, there is a time (at a Wedding ſuppoſe) which provokes us ſo naturally, not only to be merry, but, to leap and dance for joy, that it would be as abſurd then to bewail ourſelves, as it is to dance about the dead Bodies of our Friends.

Ver. 5. *A time to caſt away ſtones, and a time to gather ſtones together: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.*] And in the Plantations which we make, there is a time when it is fit to pick up Stones, and throw them out of our Vineyards or Fields of Corn; and there is another time, when it will be as neceſſary to gather up the ſame Stones again, to make a Fence about thoſe Vineyards or Fields, or to repair the Highways; and as it is in theſe natural things, ſo it is in thoſe that depend upon our own diſpoſal: there are Seaſons proper for Husband and Wife to enjoy the ends of Marriage: but there are other times, when they ought to refrain, and deny themſelves even theſe otherways innocent pleaſures.

Ver. 6. *A time to get, and a time to loſe: a time to keep, and a time to caſt away.*] In like manner, in our traffick and commerce one with another, there is a time of gaining much; but there are other times, when a man muſt be content to loſe by his Commodities: ſometimes alſo it is fit for him to lay up, and keep what he hath gotten; but at another time, it will be as fit for him to ſpend or to give away to thoſe that need it.

Ver. 7. *A time to rent, and a time to ſow: a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak:*] In direful diſaſters alſo, as when GOD is blaſphemed, it becomes us to rend our Garments; but after a certain time, it will be as becoming to ſew up the rent again: and, as on the other occaſions, the proper times for holding one's peace, or for ſpeaking, are to be obſerved; ſo in great grief, it is to no purpoſe to adminiſter comfort, till the paſſion be a little over; and then diſcourſe will be as ſeaſonable as ſilence was before, *Job.* II. 13. IV. 1, 2.

Ver. 8. *A time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace.*] To conclude, love itſelf may turn into hatred; ſo that they who are now well-affected towards us, may prove our Enemies; or thoſe in whoſe Company we now delight, there may be reaſon hereafter to avoid: And the like turns there are in publick, as well as in private Affairs; there being juſt cauſes ſometimes for making War; and then, ſuch a change in the ſtate of things that, it is greater Wiſdom to conclude a Peace.

Ver. 9. *What profit hath he that worketh, in that wherein he laboureth?*] And therefore, why do we fancy any thing to be ſettled, fixed and conſtant, here in this World; unleſs it be theſe oppoſite Changes? Or to what purpoſe is all our labour and travail for any thing, out of the Seaſon proper for it? And what great matter is it that we then get; ſince we muſt expect another Seaſon to part with it? *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 10. *I have ſeen the travail which God hath given to the ſons of men, to be exerciſed in it.*] For that which I have obſerved from all this is, That GOD hath made it our buſineſs to mark the times and ſeaſons that are fit for the doing all things, which hath great trouble and anxiety in it: and there is a farther trouble, that after we have done what we deſired, we muſt ſubmit to that time and ſeaſon, which will undo all again.

Ver. 11. *He hath made every* thing *beautiful in his time: alſo he hath ſet the world in their heart, ſo that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning*

to

to the end.] And tho' we are not wont to be ſatisfied with this viciſſitude of things yet, God no doubt, hath diſpoſed them thus moſt wiſely; and there is ſuch a beautiful order appears in ſeveral contrarieties (as for example, of heat and cold, of day and night) that we may well conclude there is ſo in all manner of events, though never ſo oppoſite; which God alſo hath given us Wiſdom to diſcern, in part; having endued man with the underſtanding of the preſent ſtate of things, in the Age wherein he lives: yet as that is imperfect (it being beyond our skill to know when our induſtry will ſucceed, and when a change will come) ſo he is not able to find out what reſpect the preſent changes have to the times that are gone before, and to thoſe that are yet to come hereafter; and ſo cannot give an exact account of the Government of God, becauſe he ſees not the beginning, and the progreſs, and the concluſion of every thing that comes to paſs. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 12. *I know that* there is *no good in them, but for* a man *to rejoice, and to do good in his life.*] Wherefore long conſideration and experience aſſure me, that, leaving theſe fruitleſs enquiries and vexatious cares about the future, the only happineſs that is in our power, is to make the beſt we can of our preſent condition: rejoycing that things are ſo well with us, and being ſolicitous for nothing in this World, but to obtain a good hope in God, by living piouſly and vertuouſly, and doing good to others with what we have; and this not remiſly and by fits, but ſeriouſly and conſtantly, as long as we live. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 13. *And alſo that every man ſhould eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it* is *the gift of God.*] And if a man have arrived at ſo much happineſs, as not to deny himſelf the uſe of what he hath at preſent, out of a vain fear of wanting in time to come; but can ſo freely and cheerfully enjoy the fruit of his honeſt labours, as to be well ſatisfied in the midſt of all the inconveniencies of this life; let him not aſcribe it unto his own Wiſdom, but thankfully acknowledge the great Goodneſs of God herein: for it is a ſingular gift of his, to be able with a quiet and contented mind, to take the comfort of thoſe Bleſſings, which God's Bounty had beſtowed on us, *Chap.* II. 24.

Ver. 14. *I know that whatſoever God doeth, it ſhall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doth* it, *that* men *ſhould fear before him.*] And, on the other ſide, it is not only very fooliſh and vain, but a great plague, to be diſcontented that things go otherwiſe than we deſire; for, certain it is, God hath ſettled them by ſuch an eternal and immutable Law, in that courſe and order before deſcribed, (*v.* 1, 2, 3, *&c.* in which nothing is ſuperfluous, nothing wanting) that it is not in the power of man, to make the leaſt alteration, one way or other: therefore we muſt alter ourſelves, and not murmur that we cannot change the courſe of things; which God hath thus immoveably fixed, not to make us miſerable, by fretting at it, but happy, by reverent ſubmiſſion to the Divine Government; and humble patience under thoſe troubles which we cannot honeſtly avoid; and a due care not to offend the Divine Majeſty; whoſe Will ſhall be done one way or other if not by us, yet upon us. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 15. *That which hath been, is now; and that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is paſt.*] This alone is ſufficient to ſilence all our unprofitable, as well as undutiful, complaints, about that which hath always been, and ever will be. For we, in this preſent Age, are ſubject to no other Laws, than thoſe by which God hath governed the World from the beginning; nor will the next produce any other method, than that wherein He hath already proceeded: but, though that which ſucceeeds thruſt out what went before, it brings the very ſame things about again; as conſtantly as Spring and Fall, Summer and Winter, return in their Seaſons.

Ver. 16. ¶ *And moreover, I ſaw under the ſun the place of judgment,* that *wickedneſs* was *there; and the place of righteouſneſs,* that *iniquity* was *there.*] But, beyond all this, it is lamentable to conſider, how that which God hath proved as a remedy for a great many evils which we bring one upon another in this World, is quite perverted; and turned to be itſelf the greateſt evil of all other. The Power and Authority, I mean, which is committed unto men of great Place, Wiſdom, and Dignity: who lean ſo much to their own affections, that I myſelf have obſerved nothing but corruption in the higheſt, as well as loweſt Courts of Judicature: for, whether mens lives or their eſtates were concerned, ſuch unjuſt Sentences were pronounced (to the condemning the innocent, and acquitting the the guilty, *&c.*) that I could not but conclude, There is nothing more dangerous, than for a man who hath not that fear of God before his eyes (which I now mentioned, *v.* 14.) to be advanced unto honour, and intruſted with power. So vain are they that place their felicity in theſe. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 17. *I ſaid in mine heart, God ſhall judge the righteous and wicked: for* there is *a time there for every purpoſe, and for every work.*] For, ſo rooted is this impiety in the hearts of men, and ſuch Arts there are to defeat the beſt endeavours to redreſs it, I could bring my thoughts about this mat-

ter, to no other iſſue but this (in which we muſt all be ſatisfied) that there is a ſupreme Judge of all, who will in due time make that difference between Men and things, which we cannot do now; abſolving and rewarding the righteous, and condemning and puniſhing the wicked: for as there is a time, I obſerved before, for all other things, ſo there is for this; they that govern the World have their time now, for contriving and acting what miſchief they pleaſe; but He will take a time hereafter, of calling them to an account, for the injuſtice they deſigned, as well as did, in the Courts of Judgment. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 18. *I ſaid in my heart concerning the eſtate of the ſons of men, that God might manifeſt them, and that they might ſee that they themſelves are beaſts.*] But in the mean time I could not but think the condition of Mankind, eſpecially of the poorer ſort of them, to be very deplorable; which made me fetch a deep ſigh and wiſh to GOD, that He would be pleaſed to lay theſe Great men open, and manifeſt to themſelves and make them ſenſible, that they have no reaſon to look down with ſo much contempt upon others; much leſs treat them like beaſts, deſtined to the ſlaughter: for, were they ſtript of their external Pomp and Power, they are ſo far from excelling other men; that, in many regards they do not excel the very Beaſts. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 19. *For that which befalleth the ſons of men befalleth beaſts, even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea, they have all one breath, ſo that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beaſt: for all* is *vanity.*] For, as the Beaſts are ſubject to many accidents which they think not of, ſo are all Mankind; who can no more foreſee ſeveral things that happen to them, than the Beaſts themſelves; or, if they herein differ from them, that they can better defend themſelves from ſome things that befal them; yet there is one thing, which makes them all equal; and that is, Death: For both Men and Beaſts, not only grow old, but die alike; and while they live, one ſucks in no other Air: than the other doth which when they can no longer breathe, a man remains as much an unprofitable lump and putrid Carkaſe, as a Beaſt: and therefore herein can pretend to no pre-eminence, above other inferiour Creatures; but they are both equally vain and periſhing.

Ver. 20. *All go unto one place, all are of the duſt, and all turn to duſt again.*] And being dead, their Bodies are deſolved into the ſame Principles, out of which they ſprang; ſo that herein they are both alike again: for Man, as proud as he is, derives his Body from no higher Original, than the Duſt; the very ſame Duſt of which the Beaſts are made; into which they both, Men and Beaſt, muſt return again at the laſt.

Ver. 21. *Who knoweth the ſpirit of man that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of the beaſt that goeth downward to the earth?*] As for the Spirit, which makes all the difference between the Beaſts and us, that is inviſible; and where ſhall we find a man, eſpecially among thoſe Great Perſons (ſpoken of before) who ſeriouſly conſiders it? and believes that that the Souls of all Mankind, go to GOD that gave them (XII. 7.) to be judged by Him (*v.* 17. of this Chapter,) whereas the Souls of Beaſts periſh with them? No; herein they differ not at all from Beaſts, that having buried their minds in brutiſh pleaſures, they have no more ſenſe of a future life than they; but imagine that their ſouls die together with their Bodies.

So ſenſeleſly ſtupid are they, that trample upon the reſt of Mankind; and yet have ſuch ignoble thoughts of themſelves, that they imagine their very Souls are no longer-liv'd than a Beaſt. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 22. *Wherefore I perceive that* there is *nothing better than that a man ſhould rejoice in his own works; for that* is *his portion: for who ſhall bring him to ſee what ſhall be after him?*] And therefore (conſidering that our Bodies have no privilege above the Beaſts, and that Mankind are ſo liable to be abuſed by thoſe who ſhould protect them, *v.* 16, 19, 20.) I was confirmed in my former Opinion (II. 24.) that it is beſt for a Man, herein alſo to imitate the Beaſts; by enjoying freely the good things GOD hath bleſſed him withal, and taking all the comfort he can find in them at preſent, without ſolicitous care about the future: For this is all he can be ſure of; it being in no man's power to ſecure him, he ſhall enjoy that hereafter, which he makes no uſe of now; much leſs when he is dead, can he be brought back again, to take any pleaſure in the fruit of all his labours, or ſee what becomes of them.

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1. *Seaſon*] The Hebrew words *Zeman* and *Gneth* ſignify either that point of *time*, when things, being ripe, come forth of themſelves, by the conſtitution of their ſeveral Beings; as all *natural* things do: or that occaſion which ſerves our *voluntary* actions; and is fit for effecting what we deſign. The *Hebrews* obſerve that *Solomon* here reckons *ſeven* oppoſite Seaſons, of each ſort: as a complete demonſtration, by induction, of the truth of this General Propoſition in the firſt Verſe. Which holds good even in Ver-

tue itſelf: which is not proper, but in its place. For Fortitude hath not always ben ſucceſsful, (as the Lord *Herbert* obſerves) nor Temperance ſafe; nor Juſtice opportune: the fury and inſolence of the outragious people, having in ſome inſurrections grown to that exceſs; that it hath been greater Wiſdom to paſs by a while, than to puniſh them. And it is very apparent alſo in our Councils, when they are conducted merely by humane Wiſdom; which is not able, without a Divine direction, to chuſe the moſt fortunate (as we call them) and happy Seaſons for undertakings. *Brutus, Cicero, Hirtius Panſa*, all thought to reſtore the ancient eſtate of the *Roman* Commonwealth (as *Melanchthon* notes) but were deceived; and after the ſame manner many are ſtill, ſtill and will be deceived. Then buſineſſes proceed, when we obey his Divine directions, and He aſſiſts: and yet then ſometimes more, and ſometimes leſs difficulty.

[*b*] *V.* 3. *Kill*] In the third Verſe I have taken the liberty of following my own Judgment in expounding the firſt part of it: which I have not referred to puniſhing and ſparing Offenders, as Interpreters do; but to the condition of Diſeaſes that are in our Bodies. For, though the other be an excellent ſenſe, yet, this ſeems to be more agreeable to the Wiſe man's meaning. Becauſe he is hitherto ſpeaking of things Natural; and the word *heal* alſo directs rather to that ſenſe, which I have given of *killing*, than the common one. The ſame may be ſaid of the next part of the Verſe; there being a crazineſs in Buildings, as well as in the Body of man: and ſome Weather ſo improper to raiſe a Fabrick that the parts will not hang together; but that which cements them moulders ſo faſt away, that that time were better ſpent, in pulling down an houſe, than in building it up.

As for the reſt of the *Calendar* or *Ephemeris* (as the Lord *Bacon* calls it) which the Wiſe man hath made of the diverſities of times and occaſions for all actions; I need give no farther account of it here, than I have done in the *Paraphraſe*.

[*c*] *V.* 9. *What profit*] Nor is it hard to expound the inference he makes in this Verſe, from the foregoing induction: which I have expreſſed as fully as I could in the *Paraphraſe*; and more largely in the *Argument* of this Chapter. *Gregory Nazianzen* thinks, he only intends to reflect upon the great inconſtancy, as of all earthly things, ſo of humane actions (ſometimes, for inſtance, men are madly in love with a Woman, and in time they as much hate her; now they are eager to get, and at another time they profuſely ſpend, ſometimes they kill, and ſometimes they are killed, ſometimes do nothing but talk, and at another time have not a word to ſay, *&c.*) and therefore all his labours are vain. But I have extended it farther, with a reſpect to other things, which the forenamed induction ſuggeſts to us.

[*d*] *V.* 11. *World in their heart*] There is greater difficulty in this Verſe, if we connect it with the reſt of the Diſcourſe; as we ought to do. Which I have endeavoured to explain by taking the word *Haolam, the World*; for the preſent ſtate of things, in this Age wherein we live (which is a genuine ſenſe of it) whereof God hath given us ſome underſtanding; but not ſo perfect as to be able to give an account, of the reaſon and ſcope of every thing, that we ſee happen in this World, becauſe we are ignorant of what went before, and of what will follow after, when we had or ſhall have no Being here.

It is commonly underſtood of the works of Nature. And in this ſenſe the Lord *Bacon* (in the beginning of his Book of the *Advancement of Learning*) hath admirably expounded it; in this manner: In theſe words, *He hath placed the World in man's heart, &c.* "*Solomon* declares not "obſcurely, that God hath framed the "mind of man, as a Mirrour, or Look-"ing-glaſs, capable of the Image of the "whole World; and as deſirous to re-"ceive it, as the eye is to entertain the "light: and not only delighted in behold-"ing the variety of things, and the vi-"ciſſitudeof times; but ambitious to find "out and diſcover the immoveable and "inviolable Laws and Decrees of Nature. "And though he intimate, that this "whole OEconomy of Nature (which "he calls, *The work that God hath wrought, "from the beginning to the end*) cannot be "found out by man; it doth not dero-"gate from the capacity of his mind, "but is to be imputed to the impedi-"ments of Learning, *&c.*"

There is one Interpreter *(Corranus)* who by *Olam, World*, underſtands the Circular motion of things for the ſervice of man. But I can find no ſuch uſe of the word any where, elſe, the ſenſe would be elegant enough, which ariſes from thence; *viz.* that this *revolution* being remote from our knowledge, and a ſecret to us; who cannot tell, what day or hour it will be: we ought not to trouble ourſelves about this; but make uſe of the preſent, and refer the reſt to God.

Melanchthon alſo hath an unuſual Interpretation; which is, that God made things ſo, that we ſhould ſweetly enjoy them (that he underſtands by *placing the World in man's heart*) but men make the uſe of them unpleaſant, by their wandring deſires, by their vain ſolicitude, by their diffidence; which makes them long after new things,

and

and meddle with that which is unneceſſary. Like *M. Anthony*, who when he had gotten the moſt flouriſhing part of the Empire, could not be content; but, out of an unquiet Nature, deſired the whole, and ſo loſt all. This he makes the ſenſe of the latter end of the Verſe; which he thus tranſlates, *Man cannot find out the work of God, neither the beginning nor the end of it.* Therefore, as I ſaid juſt now, it is Wiſdom to ſatisfy ourſelves with what we have; for the preſent only is that, which is in our own power.

[e] *V.* 12, 13.] And ſo it follows in theſe two Verſes; the ſenſe of which *Gregory Nazianzen* (Orat LIII.) hath thus briefly expreſſed, *The greateſt Good of man, I perſuade myſelf to be* εὐφροσύνην, *cheerfulneſs of mind, and beneficence, or doing good to others*; and this ſhort pleaſure alone the Divine indulgence beſtows upon us, if righteouſneſs conduct all our affairs.

[f] *V.* 14, 15.] And with this we muſt reſt contented, for with all our toilſome thoughts, we cannot alter the courſe of things: which God, he here ſhows, hath immutably ſettled; on purpoſe that we ſhould be ſenſible of a power above ourſelves. Which it is our Wiſdom, to ſtand in ſuch awe of, as not to contend with it, but ſubmit unto it: that ſo we may obtain all the favour from Him, which in ſuch a ſtate of things, as his Wiſdom hath appointed, can be indulged to us. And here, I think, *Melanchon* hath very pertinently obſerved, that *Solomon* doth not merely recite, the vain complaints and endeavours of Mankind, after the manner of Philoſophers and Poets: but lays down a Rule of life, as the beſt remedy that can be found, for our Diſeaſe. Which is, *not to truſt to ourſelves, nor to indulge our own curioſity and appetites; but to be ſenſible of our own infirmities, to fear God, to obey his commands, to keep within the Bounds of our vocations, and to beg and expect the help of God, and to acquieſce in his holy will and pleaſure.*

[g] *V.* 16.] Unto theſe things it is better for us to apply ourſelves, than it is to endeavour to be great and mighty (which is another vain deſire of man, fancying he can thereby keep off many evils) for few can be at the top of all; and ſo there muſt be ſtill greater than we, by whom we may be oppreſſed: And our vexation will be ſo much the greater, when with all our power we cannot hinder it. As for thoſe that are in the very higheſt places (if they have not that fear of God before ſpoken of, *v.* 14.) their power doth but betray them, to do the more miſchief unto themſelves and others; and thereby encreaſe the miſery of Mankind. This ſeems to be the dependence between the foregoing Verſes and this. Wherein the Wiſe man paſſes to the conſideration of the *Third* thing (mentioned upon *Chap.* I. 12.) unto which ſome aſpire, as the higheſt happineſs, *viz. Greatneſs, Power* and *Honour*. Which if a man be bad, make him ſo much the worſe himſelf, and the World by his means: and if he be good, will trouble him very much, to find there are many abuſes, which by all his power he cannot remedy. For *Solomon* himſelf ſaw ſeveral groſs impieties committed (as he tells us in this Verſe) even by them who were appointed to be the Guardians of Mens lives, liberties and enjoyments; which he, as great a King as he was, wanted ability wholly to redreſs: but ſtill they went on ſo confidently in their wicked courſe of perverting Judgment, that he was fain to leave them to be judged by the ſupreme Judge of all, God Almighty. And if it were ſo, in the Reign of a good and wiſe King; what could be hoped for, in the Reign of tuoſe who were impious and injudicious; as moſt of the Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah* were? For ſuch pervert all things, by their covetouſneſs, ambition or folly; ſo that their Subjects can have no Juſtice, nor enjoy any tranquillity. And beſides, they permit (as he ſhews afterwards, *Chap. V.*) many corruptions to creep into the Divine Worſhip;) and ridiculous rather than religious Ceremonies to be introduced, *&c.* whereupon follows a great decay of all moral Vertue.

In ſhort, this is a great part of the Vanity and Miſery, to which we are here ſubject; that, as *Melanchon* well notes, there are many things done unjuſtly, even under juſt Governours; becauſe they are not able to look unto all things themſelves, but muſt manage them by other men: many of which are negligent, others wicked and ſwayed by depraved affections; and yet crafty enough to cover their own guilt. Here is the only comfort, That *God notwithſtanding preſerves Government, and Political Order*; and in his time will judge, even Kings and Judges of the Earth.

[h] *V.* 17.] The laſt words of this Verſe, may, in my Judgment, be thus moſt literally tranſlated out of the *Hebrew*: *There is a time for* (judging) *every purpoſe and every work there*, viz. in thoſe corrupt Courts of Judgment: every thing that hath been tranſacted, in the Judicatures he had been ſpeaking of.

[i] *V.* 18.] Theſe words, which follow the former, are variouſly interpreted: but they have a perſpicuous ſenſe, if they be taken in the coherence with the foregoing (as in reaſon they ought to be) without fancying, as ſome have done, that they are ſpoken in the perſon of an *Epicure*. And ſo I have conſidered them; as intended to take down the vain opinion thoſe Great men have of themſelves (which

(which makes them tyrannize over their Inferiours) by repreſenting to them (or rather, deſiring God would effectually repreſent to their minds) how little they differ from Beaſts: ſave only in that, which they do not at all value, or regard *viz.* their immortal ſpirits.

The word *Lebaram*, to *manifeſt them*, is commonly expounded of God's manifeſting them unto others; but I have taken it for his ſhowing them to themſelves; agreeable to the word that follows, *Lireoth, that they might ſee*, &c. The whole may be thus tranſlated—*that God would clear their minds, that they may ſee*, &c. For it comes from a Root which ſignifies ſuch an accurate ſeparation of one thing from another; that the difference may be perſpicuouſly diſcerned.

[*k*] *V.* 21.] And thus it ſeems alſo moſt reaſonable to expound this laſt Verſe, in connexion with all the reſt; and to underſtand the firſt word of it, *Who*; concerning thoſe perſons mentioned in the beginning of this Diſcourſe. *Who among thoſe unrighteous Judges*, &c.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Having conſidered the power, which many times falls into the hands of unjuſt and cruel men; he now repreſents the miſerable eſtate of thoſe that are ſubject to them: as a farther Argument of the vanity and vexation, unto which Mankind are liable in this troubleſome World. And having noted ſome of the principal miſchiefs of this ſort (of which I ſhall give a diſtinct account in the Paraphraſe *and* Annotations *upon it) he concludes the Chapter with ſome Animadverſions upon the condition of the greateſt, nay, and the beſt of Princes: who are not ſo happy, as the World is apt to think them.*

Ver. 1. *SO I returned, and conſidered all the oppreſſions that are done under the ſun: and behold, the tears of* ſuch as were *oppreſſed, and they had no comforter; and on the ſide of their oppreſſors* there was *power, but they had no comforter.*] But I have not yet done with the conſideration of the miſeries which Mankind ſuffer; by the abuſe of that power, which is neceſſarily placed in the hands of ſome perſons for the good of others (III. 16.) For, reflecting again upon it, I obſerved the innumerable ways that were practiſed in this World, for the undoing of others; both by violence and exactions, and by fraud and calumnies (as well as by unjuſt Decrees) whereby ſo many were cruſhed, that nothing was to be ſeen or heard but the tears and cries, the ſighs and groans of ſuch as lay in a deſolate condition, and could find no relief; no, not ſo much as one to comfort them: For ſuch was the greatneſs of their Oppreſſors, who had gotten all power into their hands; that as they could not defend themſelves againſt them, ſo no body elſe durſt expreſs their compaſſion towards them, much leſs plead for them; for fear of being ſerved in the ſame kind themſelves. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Wherefore I praiſed the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive.*] Which made me think it was better to be among the dead, who have made an happy eſcape from all theſe calamities, than to remain ſtill alive; either to ſuffer under this tyranny; or to live in perpetual fear of it; or to behold ſuch great grief of heart (but without power to help them) what many miſerable Wretches endure.

Ver. 3. *Yea, better is he, than both they, who hath not yet been, who hath not ſeen the evil work that is done under the ſun.*] Or rather (for why ſhould I compare the living with thoſe, who, though they now lie at reſt in their Graves, have been heretofore very ſorely afflicted?) much more deſirable than either of theſe, is it not to have come into the world at all: and ſo to have had no ſenſe of the miſeries, which the dead have formerly felt, and the living now undergo.

Ver. 4. ¶ *Again, I conſidered all travel, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This* is *alſo vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*] For, beſides what they ſuffer from mighty Oppreſſors, they give one another a great deal of trouble; Pride, Ambition, Emulation, Envy and Hatred reigning ſo uncontroulably every where among all Orders and Ranks, all Trades and Profeſſions, that when a man hath taken a great deal of honeſt pains, in ſome uſeful work, and brought it to perfection; inſtead of gaining credit by it, and being honoured for it, his Neighbours look awry upon him: nay, he is maligned, diſparaged and traduced, by thoſe, who either cannot or will not imitate (but only carp at) his ingenious labours. So vain it is to endeavour to excel others in Art or Induſtry; which procure a man ill-will, when he looks for thanks and commendations: and ſuch an affliction it is to a man's ſpirit, to labour hard for an ungrateful World; who are tormented by that, which ſhould pleaſe them: and cannot ſee any worth in another, but they are vexed within themſelves. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 5. *The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own fleſh.*] But ſee now (as a farther inſtance of the Vanity of Mankind) what uſe ſome make of this: who are ſo abſurdly fooliſh, as to be utterly diſcouraged and to ſit down in perfect idleneſs; becauſe there are ſuch oppreſſions on one hand from thoſe above them, (*v.* 1.) and ſuch emulations on the other hand, from thoſe that are equal with them, and under them (*v.* 4.) A wiſe reſolution this! to do nothing, becauſe others do ill; not to ſatisfy one's ſelf,

becauſe others will be diſpleaſed; not to ſatisfy, did I ſay? nay, he is hunger-bitten, and eaten up with cares how to live; he hath not a Rag to his Back to cover his nakedneſs; having reduced himſelf and Family, by his lazineſs to extreme penury.

Ver. 6. *Better* is *an handful* with *quietneſs, than both the hands full* with *travail and vexation of ſpirit.*] And though he want not excuſes for his folly, yet they are as idle as his ſloth: For he ſenſeleſly applies that common Saying to his purpoſe, *One handful with eaſe, is better than two without it.* Which is very true, if rightly underſtood; and may ſerve to reprove both him, and thoſe from whom he learns this folly: for as idleneſs and emptineſs always go together (and therefore he in vain expects to have ſo much as *one handful* without labour) ſo is a moderate Eſtate gotten honeſtly with moderate diligence, and enjoyed handſomely with perfect contentment; better than the greateſt Treaſures gotten by oppreſſion or with infinite toil, and enjoyed with anxious thoughts and fretting cares, and expoſing a man either to the hatred or the envy of others. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 7. ¶ *Then I returned, and I ſaw vanity under the ſun.*] Nor is this all the folly into which men fall, by the forenamed tyranny and oppreſſion (v. 1.) but reflecting again upon this Subject, I obſerved another extreme into which they run; no leſs void of reaſon, and of ſatisfaction than the former.

Ver. 8. *There is one* alone, *and* there is *not a ſecond; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet* is there *no end of all his labour, neither is his eye ſatisfied with riches, neither* ſaith he, *For whom do I labour, and bereave my ſoul of good? This* is *alſo vanity, yea it* is *a ſore travel.*] For, as ſome grow idle, ſo others grow too ſcraping and penurious; it being no rare thing to find a man that lives ſingle, and alone without ſo much as a Companion, and hath neither Child, nor Brother, nor Kinſman, to make his Heir; and yet he ſets no meaſures, either to his labours, or to his deſires, but toils and craves without end: and, which is ſtill worſe, as he can ſcarce find in his heart to allow himſelf the neceſſaries, much leſs the pleaſures of this life, ſo it never comes into his mind to think, who ſhall be the better for all this when he dies; and what a madneſs it is, both to rack his mind with cares, and to pinch his Belly, and deny himſelf the comfort of what he hath; for the ſake of he knows not whom.

This alſo certainly is not only a ſenſeleſs and unprofitable folly; but one of the greateſt plagues and torments of human life. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 9. ¶ *Two* are *better than one; becauſe they have a good reward for their labour.*] How much wiſer is he, who not only enjoys what he hath himſelf; but takes others into the Society, to partake of the good things, that GOD hath given him? For nothing is more comfortable than good Company; as nothing is more dull and melancholly, than a ſolitary life: and beſides, when two or more are adjoined together in common counſel, and mutual help, and aſſiſtance, they will not only act more cheerfully; but more eaſily effect their deſign, and take the greater pleaſure in the fruits of their labour. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 10. *For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him* that is *alone when he falleth: for* he hath *not another to help him up.*] Or if they have any ill ſucceſs, or fall into danger, it will not only make the ſingular benefit of fellowſhip, the more plainly appear; becauſe they will relieve and reſcue one the other; but lamentable is his condition, who hath no Friend, no Companion, to reach out his charitable hand to him, when he falls (ſuppoſe into a Pit) none to comfort him, when he is ſick; none to teſtify his innocence, when he is defamed; or, which is worſe, to reſtore him, when by his own imprudence or negligence, he falls into a ſin.

Ver. 11. *Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm* alone.] And therefore in the very beginning of the World, GOD did not think fit to let man be alone, but gave him an Help meet for him: and as two that lie together in the ſame Bed, cheriſh one another, by their mutual heat, but it is hard to be warm alone; ſo do they that are ſtrong, undaunted, vigorous and cheerfnl, infuſe that courage and comfort, which Silver and Gold cannot give, into thoſe that are of a weak, timorous, dejected or melancholy ſpirit.

Ver. 12. *And if one prevail againſt him, two ſhall withſtand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*] To conclude, we are never more ſenſible of the benefit of Society, than when we are aſſaulted by a powerful Enemy; whom we cannot reſiſt alone, but by the help of a Friend may be able to overcome: for as a great many Threads twiſted together, are not quickly broken, though a ſingle one be ſoon ſnapt aſunder; ſo he that is ſurrounded by his Children, Friends and Neighbours, will make a better defence, and hold out longer againſt thoſe that invade his right, than that wretched man can do (v. 8.) who by loving money alone, hath deprived himſelf of all ſuch ſuccours.

Ver. 13. ¶ *Better* is *a poor and a wiſe child, than an old and fooliſh king, who will no more be admoniſhed.*] But it is not Society alone will make a man happy, without Wiſdom and Vertue. For who are better attended, and guarded than Kings? and yet the pooreſt man that is, if he be wiſe and good, is far happier than the wealthieſt

wealthieſt Prince on Earth, who fooliſhly abuſeth his power: nay, the towardly Child of a poor man, is much better than ſuch a King, though his greatneſs be made more venerable by his grey hairs: For, beſides that Wiſdom makes the poor Youth contented with his condition, though never ſo mean, (a Bleſſing at which Princes hardly arrive) it renders wholeſome admonition alſo acceptable to him, when by his inexperience he falls into an error; but folly makes the other impatient of all advice and counſel, and the older he is, the more obſtinate; becauſe, as his kingly Dignity, he fancies, authorizes him to do what he liſt, ſo his Age gives him a privilege of knowing better than any body can tell him, what to do. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 14. *For out of priſon he cometh to reign whereas alſo* he that is *born in his kingdom becometh poor.*] By which means it comes to paſs, that he who was born a mere Beggar, nay, was as poor and abject as the vileſt Slave, riſes by his ſingular Prudence, Counſel and Conduct unto a Throne: when he whoſe Anceſtors were Kings, and poſſeſſed his Dominions by an Hereditary Right, is deſerted by his Subjects, and, through his folly and wickedneſs, falls into ſuch contempt, that he not only loſes his Crown, but is reduced to the greateſt poverty, in which he ſpends a miſerable life.

Ver. 15. *I conſidered all the living which walk under the ſun, with the ſecond child that ſhall ſtand up in his ſtead.*] Or if this happen not, yet (ſuch is the infelicity of good Princes) I have ſeen a great King, left with nothing but the bare Title, and the outward State of Royalty; the hearts and affections of all Nobles, Gentry, and common people, from one end of the Kingdom to the other, enclining to his Son (or to the next Heir) that is to ſucceed him; unto whom they do obeyſance, as if he were already upon the Throne, but neglect his old Father; who ſees himſelf robbed of thoſe honours, in which he placed his happineſs; and that by his own Son, who would have been more dutiful, perhaps, if he had been a private man. *See* Annot [*b*].

Ver. 16. There is *no end of all the people*, even *of all that have been before them: they alſo that come after, ſhall not rejoyce in him. Surely this alſo is vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*] Nor is this a thing that will have an end, but a humour ſo rooted in all Mankind; that, as in all preceeding times (before this King and Son were born) they have been weary of that which they have long enjoyed; ſo this young prince, who is now followed with ſuch applauſe, muſt not think that it will laſt alway: but they that come after will take as little delight in him, as the preſent Generation doth in his Father; and, when he grows old, court his Son after the ſame faſhion, as they now do him, being young.

From all which it appears, that happineſs is not to be found in Honour and Dignity; no, not in the very higheſt Pitch of it, which is the Kingly Power: for there alſo is not only diſſatisfaction, but many dangers, troubles, and vexatious cares, which very much diſturb and perplex their Spirits. *See* Annot. [*i*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1. *oppreſſions*] There are more evils than one, that ariſe from the ill adminiſtration of publick Affairs. For they are either *external* or *internal*. And the *external* are *two*; either from *Superiors* or from *Equals* and *Inferiors*. Thoſe from *Superiors* he ſpeaks of in this Verſe, and calls by the general name of *oppreſſions*. Which comes from a Root in the *Hebrew*, that ſignifies indifferently to oppreſs (or rather to *ſqueeze* others, and utterly *cruſh* them) whether it be by forcible violence, or by extortion in the traffick, or by fraud, circumvention and falſe accuſation. If it refer to any one of theſe, more than to another, it is to the laſt. And therefore LXX. though they tranſlate it by ſeveral words, importing bearing down others by main ſtrength, yet by none ſo frequent, as by συκοφαντίαν, to undo athers by *calumny*.

[*b*] *V.* 4. *envied*] Thoſe evils which come from *Equals* or *Inferiors*, he ſpeaks of in this Verſe, and calls by the general name of *Envy*; which is a word in the *Hebrew*, that ſignifies, when it is taken in an ill ſenſe, all thoſe vicious affections, which are the cauſes, or the effects of envious emulation, at the good qualities or proſperity of another perſon. Which St. *James* calls πικρὸν ζῆλον, *bitter zeal or envying*, III. 14. and St. *Paul* is wont to expreſs by two words, ἔρις and ζῆλος ſtrife (or making bate) and envying, *XIII. Rom.* 13. *ſtrife and envying*, i. e. contentious or factious emulation, *I. Philip.* 15. *Envy and Strife*, i. e. invidious contention.

[*c*] *V.* 5. *foldeth his hands*] Here he paſſes to thoſe evils which I called *internal*; which come not from others, but from ourſelves. For ſome (ſeeing the forenamed *oppreſſions*; or the *envy* that attends upon mens induſtry and good ſucceſſes) grow idle and leave off all buſineſs (expreſſed here by *folding the hands*, ſee VI. *Prov.* 10.) becauſe it is to no purpoſe to get, what another may preſently take away; or if he keep, it raiſes him other Enemies, who grudge to ſee him ſo happy.

By this means ſuch a man brings himſelf to extreme poverty: ſo that Phraſe, *Eateth his own fleſh*, ſignifies. One that

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is ready to die with hunger: and whoſe Wife and Children (called in Scripture a man's *fleſh*) are in danger to ſtarve with him. There are other Explications of this Phraſe, upon which I have touched in the *Paraphraſe*, which admirably expreſs the folly of him, that undoes himſelf, to avoid being undone by others.

[*d*] *V.* 6. *better is an handful*] Which though it be a very abſurd reſolution; yet he wants not Apologies for it. Nay, as if he were the only Wiſe man (*ſapientum octavus*, wiſer than ſeven men that can render a reaſon, as Biſhop *Sanderſon* ſpeaks) he utters Sentences (but it is *like a Parable in the mouth of a fool*, a Speech full of reaſon in itſelf but witleſly applied) and ſays that *better is an handful with quietneſs*, &c. Wherein he makes a ſhow, of being the moſt contented Soul that lives; but is far from it: deſiring and coveting as much, as the moſt toiling and moiling Wretch in the World; if he might but have it, and never ſweat for it.

Thus ſome underſtand this *ſixth* Verſe: which others take to be *Solomon*'s advice to the envious ſpoken of before, or to the covetous, ſpoken of afterward, that they would be contented with their condition: moderate riches having fewer cares; which a great Eſtate brings along with it, in abundance. Unto all which I have had reſpect in the *Paraphraſe* upon this Verſe.

[*e*] *V.* 8. *one alone*] And as this is the fault on one ſide; ſo, on the other, there are thoſe who turn their thoughts altogether, to ſave what they can: pinching themſelves, by a penurious way of living; that they may ſeem poor and not worth the ſqueezing; and likewiſe, have a ſecret reſerve of unknown Treaſures, in caſe they be oppreſſed. This he deſcribes here, by the example of a man, who hath neither Wife, nor Child, nor Friend, nor Companion; but lives ſolitary in a houſe by himſelf; where he ſpends little, and yet thinks of nothing but getting riches: which he enjoys not at all only looks upon them, and wiſhes ſtill to ſee more.

One, not a ſecond] is properly a man without an Heir, or a Succeſſor; as *v.* 15.

[*f*] *V.* 9, *&c.*] Upon the occaſion of the foregoing Obſervation, *v.* 8. (the better to repreſent the folly of that ſottiſh humour, he there deſcribes) he ſets forth the benefit of Society, which *Greg. Thaumaturgus here calls κοινωνίαν βίου*, living in fellowſhip, and communion together. This he ſhews is profitable, *firſt*, to procure us greater happineſs; which is the ſubject of this 9th Verſe. *Secondly*, to preſerve us in the enjoyment of that happineſs when we have attained it: as he ſhews by three inſtances. *Firſt*, to deliver us out of dangers, *v.* 10. *Secondly*, To fortify us againſt them, *v.* 11. *Thirdly*, To repel them, when they actually aſſault us, *v.* 12. Where is a Proverbial Saying of a *triple Cord*, or *Thread*; like to which there are many in other Authors; but I forbear to fill this Paper with them, and leave thoſe alſo who have a mind to allegorical applications of theſe three things, to ſeek for them in other Books. For my buſineſs is only, to give a brief account of the literal ſenſe; which is this in ſhort, That a Companion will afford us his help and aſſiſtance many ways; and, if there were no other benefit to be reaped from him, this would be an exceeding great comfort; to have one, in our adverſity, into whoſe boſom we may exonerate our ſorrows; which will be the lighter, if we ſee there is any Body that ſympathizes with us in our calamities.

[*g*] *V.* 13, 14.] And thus having repreſented the miſerable effects of power abuſed to oppoſition: which bereaves men of the ſweeteſt conſorts of life; making them avoid Society: he returns to conſider the wretched eſtate of ſuch Oppreſſors, though never ſo mighty. Both from their own folly, *v.* 13, 14. (where that expreſſion is very remarkable, he *is made* or *becomes* poor in his Kingdom, as Dr. *Hammond* well expounds it upon I. *Mat. not. a*) and from the fickleneſs and inconſtancy of the peoples affections; which creates a great many troubles even to good Governours, *v.* 15, 16. Where there are many difficulties in the *Hebrew* Texts; but not ſuch as makes the ſenſe obſcure: and an account is given of them by many Authors, and therefore I ſhall only note what the Lord *Bacon* hath obſerved, for the illuſtration of the 15th Verſe, and what *de Dieu* hath noted upon the 16th.

[*h*] *V.* 15.] This Verſe ſets out the vanity of the people; who are wont to preſs and flock about the deſigned Succeſſors of Princes; "the root of which Vanity "ſaith the Lord *Bacon* (*L. VII. Advanc. of "Learn. Ch.* 2. *Parab.* 20.) is that frenzy "in the minds of men, which inclines "them, with too extreme an affection, "unto their own projected hopes. *For "the man is rarely found, that is not more "delighted with the contemplation of his fu-"ture hopes, than with the fruition of what "he poſſeſſeth.* Another thing is, that *no-"velty which is pleaſing to man's nature, "and earneſtly coveted:* now in the Succeſſor to a Prince (called here his *ſe-"cond*, he that is next to him) theſe two "concur; *Hope*, and *Novelty*. Which "make *more men* (as *Pompey* ſaid to *Scy-"la*, and *Tiberius* afterward touching "*Macro*) *adore the riſing, than the ſetting "Sun.* And though Princes perhaps, who "are in preſent poſſeſſion, be not much "moved with this fond humour, nor "make any great matter of it (as nei-"ther *Scylla* nor *Tiberius* did) nay they "ſmile, it is poſſible, at the levity of "men; and do not ſtand to fight with

"Dreams

" Dreams (for Hope is but the Dream " of a man awake) yet it cannot but " inwardly vex them, to ſee themſelves " ſlighted, even by thoſe on whom they " have beſtowed many benefits, merely " in hope of receiving more from their " next ſuppoſed Succeſſor. For they can- " not reaſonably expect more, perhaps, " from him that now reigns; and there- " fore they make timely applications to " the next Heir. He hath done enough " for them; and therefore they betake " themſelves to him, who hath yet done " nothing. And beſides, old men grow te- " nacious, moroſe and ſowre; whereas " Youth is commonly liberal, jocund, " without care, and ambitious to do great " things; eſpecially at his entrance upon " the Kingdom. This, ſaith another learned Writer, makes the long life of Princes, and their power, troubleſome and grievous, both to Courtiers and People: of which they that live at *Rome*, doth not want ocular demonſtration.

There is nothing more needful for the explication of this Verſe, but only to obſerve, that the *Child* or *Youth*, who is here called *the ſecond*, doth not ſuppoſe another Child or Youth that is *firſt*: but only ſignify, that this Youth is *ſecond in the Kingdom*. Not ſecond, in reſpect to another Son, but ſecond, in reſpect to his Father; who reigns before him; and when he dies the Son ſucceeds him.

[i] *V.* 16.] The firſt words of this laſt Verſe, *L. de Dieu* ſeems to me, to have expreſſed better than any other Interpreter: they running thus, word for word, in the *Hebrew*; *There is no end to any people.* That is, no end for their fickleneſs, no bounds to their inconſtancy; but one Notion is as ſubject to it, as another. And as this Age follows the former, ſo the next will follow this; in its levity and mutability. And therefore thoſe young Princes, who are tranſported with the acclamations of the people, do but feed upon Wind (as ſome, I obſerved upon the firſt Chapter, tranſlate thoſe words, which we render *vexation of Spirit*): For their applauſes are like to their affections, as changeable as the Wind; which will turn another way, to ſome other perſon, when this preſent Prince grows old, or he rules ill, or the peoples fancy and humour alters. And then it will indeed be a ſore affliction to him, to ſee himſelf deſpiſed, by thoſe who formerly cried him up as if he had been their Darling.

It may be referred alſo, to the very Government itſelf; with which the *Iſraelites* were not pleaſed. For when they were under Judges they deſired a King: and then they were not pleaſed with the *Monarchy*, but wiſhed for the old *Ariſtocracy* again: Though that in truth was the moſt excellent *Monarchy*, which they would not underſtand, under the immediate Government of GOD Himſelf.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

Under an ill Government in the State, Religion iſelf is commonly corrupted in the Church. And therefore having ſet forth the miſeries people endure, under the oppreſſions of an abuſed Power, and the extreams of folly into which it drives them; he begins this Chapter with a Correction of thoſe errors that are in Religion. Which is the only remedy indeed, the only comfort we have againſt all the troubles to which we are ſubject in this World: but ſuch is the Vanity *of Mankind, they ſpoil their very remedy, and take away all the Vertue of that, which ſhould be their ſupport; turning it into mere Ceremony, whilſt their minds remain impure, and without any true ſenſe of God. For they do not conſider that He, who is a pure mind Himſelf, muſt be better pleaſed with pure thoughts and affections, compoſed to the obſervance of his Will, and acquieſcence in his pleaſure; than with all the Sacrifices and Offerings in the World, which the wicked may bring Him as well as the good.*

To prevent therefore this new folly, into which men are apt to run, when they intend to cure all the reſt, Solomon *ſhews all thoſe who would attain true tranquility of mind; what they muſt do, and what they muſt avoid, in the Worſhip of God. And about the middle of the Chapter, as I ſhall obſerve in the Annotations, proceeds to conſider the laſt of thoſe* four *things, wherein men place their happineſs.*

Ver. 1. [K] *EEP thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the ſacrifice of fools for they conſider not that they do evil.*] And now, leſt any man add to the affliction and torment of his Spirit, even by that which is the only cure for it, let every one, who would be a true Worſhipper of GOD, in whom alone lies the happineſs we ſeek, take care to avoid that negligence which is obſervable in many people; and to approach with all reverence, both of Body and Soul, into his bleſſed Preſence; but do not think to pleaſe Him with mere poſtures of Devotion; no, nor with Sacrifices and incence, without the Oblation of an obedient Heart, diſpoſed to do what he would have thee: For the worſt men in the World may be able to offer Him the richeſt Sacrifices, but are very impious, as well as fooliſh, if they think He delights in the fat and the Blood of Beaſts (ſave only as teſtimonies of love to him, and acts of obedience unto his Will) ſor in that very thought they offend Him and make no conſcience what evil they do,

while they believe their Sacrifices atone for all. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter* any *thing before God: for God* is *in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*] And next to this, when thou makeſt thy Prayers to GOD, or giveſt Him thanks for his benefits, deliberate with thyſelf before-hand, what it is fit for thee to ask of him, or to vow unto Him: and let not any ſudden paſſion, make thee inconſiderately, either with thy mouth or in thy mind, deſire what is not fit for thee to have; or promiſe what is not fit for Him to receive, or thou art not able or willing to give. But remember, firſt, how infinitely great the LORD and Governour of the World is, who comprehends all things; and then, how little and vile thou art, who proſtrateſt thyſelf before Him: and therefore do not dare to ſpeak to Him, as an Equal, whatſoever comes into thy mind, much leſs to make Him large promiſes, which thou can'ſt not perform; but let a ſenſe of his Majeſty, and of thy meanneſs, overcome thee into a profound Reverence of Him; expreſſing itſelf rather in ardent ſighs and groans, than in abundance of words; which ſignify nothing, but want of a ſerious Apprehenſion of Him. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *For a dream cometh through the multitude of buſineſs, and a fool's voice* is known *by multitude of words.*] It is ſo difficult, at the ſame time, to ſpeak much and wiſely unto GOD, that a man, whoſe thoughts have been diſtracted with a great deal of troubleſome buſineſs in the day, is not more likely to be diſturbed with confuſed Dreams in the Night; than he who pours out abundance of Words in his Prayers, is in danger to vent a great many vain, unſeemly, abſurd (if not impious) things, which are utterly unworthy of the Divine Majeſty. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *When thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: for* he hath *no pleaſure in fools; pay that which thou haſt vowed.*] Yet this is not his greateſt danger; for ſuch men having in a Fit of Zeal bound themſelves to GOD in magnificent promiſes, are very loth to perform them, when they are cool again. And therefore let me farther adviſe thee, when in great ſtraits and difficulties, or after great Bleſſings received from Him, thou art apt, out of abundance of devout affection, to vow what thou wilt do for him; to deliberate and conſider, as I ſaid, in the firſt place, what thou art truly willing and able to give Him; and then, having once vowed it to Him, be no leſs forward to perform, than thou waſt to promiſe: For he is highly offended with thoſe, that childiſhly trifle with Him, or rather impiouſly mock him with deluſive promiſes, and do not keep their word with Him: and therefore let me again adviſe thee, to be very faithful and cheerful too in diſcharging ſuch Obligations ſpeedily. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Better* is it *that thou ſhouldeſt not vow, than that thou ſhouldeſt vow and not pay.*] For though the innumerable benefits He beſtows on thee, may require ſome ſuch grateful return from thee; yet it is a leſs fault not to vow at all, than having vowed, not to perform: the one being but a neglect, the other an affront, nay, a contempt of his Majeſty; who needs nothing indeed that thou can'ſt give Him, but will not ſuffer a ſcorn to be put upon Him. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 6. *Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin, neither ſay thou before the angel, that it* was *an errour: wherefore ſhould God be angry at thy voice, and deſtroy the work of thine hands?*] Therefore do not haſtily engage thyſelf in ſuch Vows, as the weakneſs of humane Nature, and thy fleſhly reluctances, will not ſuffer thee to perform; much leſs think of being abſolved from the obligations thou layeſt on thyſelf, in the Preſence of GOD, and of his holy Angels, by ſuch fooliſh excuſes as theſe; It was a miſtake; I did not mind what I ſaid; or that was not my meaning: for this will but more encreaſe thy guilt: and why ſhouldeſt thou farther incenſe the anger of the Almighty (who is too much provoked already, by thy breach of Faith with Him) not only to defeat thoſe deſigns, for the ſucceſs of which perhaps it was, that thou madeſt thy Vows; but blaſt all thy undertakings, and bring thy whole eſtate to ruin. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 7. *For in the multitude of dreams and and many words,* there are *alſo* divers *vanities: but fear thou God.*] For all this folly, inconſtancy and falſhood of Mankind, proceeds from the want of a ſerious awful ſenſe of GOD, in whoſe Worſhip and Service, they therefore deviſe, after the manner of men in Dreams, a multitude of ſenſeleſs things; hampering themſelves, for inſtance, in many Vows, from which they ſeek afterward in vain to extricate themſelves, and therefore plainly violate and break: the Cure of which lies in an holy fear of offending GOD; with which poſſeſs thy Soul, eſpecially when thou comeſt into his Houſe, that it may preſerve thee from ſpeaking much unto Him, and from vowing any thing, which is either unworthy of Him, or ſo inconvenient to thyſelf, that afterward thou ſhalt not find in thy heart to make it good. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 8. ¶ *If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and juſtice in a province, marvel not at the matter, for he* that is *higher than the higheſt, regardeth, and* there be *higher than they.*] And this alſo will preſerve thee (if thou alway preſerveſt it in mind) from being too much troubled at that abuſe of Power, which began this Diſcourſe (III. 16.) when thou ſeeſt, for inſtance, thoſe who ſhould vindicate and protect the poor, become the Inſtruments of their oppreſſion; ſo that even in the Courts of Juſtice, to which they fly for relief, their Rights, and their lives, perhaps, are violently wreſted from them; Be not dejected

at

at this bold licence, which they take; but remember that these Great men have one higher than themselves; *viz.* the King; whom GOD hath set over them, as well as over others, to inspect their Doings and to judge them, and if he neglect his Duty too, there are higher than them all, *viz.* GOD, and his holy Angels; whom He will employ to punish both them and him. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 9. ¶ *Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all; the king* himself *is served by the field.*] And now let us consider, how senseless the love of money is, which is the cause of all this rapine and violent dealing. And this appears from the fruitfulness of the Earth; which brings forth more than enough for all mens necessities, if Husbandry be not neglected: an employment no less noble than innocent; for Kings themselves, in former times, have not disdained to give their mind unto it; nor is there any Prince now, who is not so much indebted to it, that it ought to be one of his principal cares, to encourage, secure and protect it.

And yet, such is the vanity of Mankind, that, disregarding these Riches, which lie not very deep in the Earth, all their business is, with incessant pains and danger, to dig into its Bowels for Gold and Silver: which tempt them also to oppress and squeeze the Poor, to pervert judgment, and do all manner of evil, to extort their money from them. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 10. *He that loveth silver shall, not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance, with encrease: this* is *also vanity.*] And what can it do for him that sets his heart upon it, but only so encrease his desires, that they can never be satisfied? for though necessary things have certain Bounds set them by Nature, beyond which we do not desire them; yet, Money and Riches and all unnecessary things are unlimited; and therefore excite an endless appetite after them: which very appetite also deprives him, who indulges it, of the fruit of all his abundance for imagining he parts with so much of his happiness, as he doth of his Money, he hath not the heart to make use of it for his pleasure; nor scarce for his necessity. This is another strange folly, or rather madness, which infests Mankind; and miserably torments them. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 11. *When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good* is there *to the owner thereof, saving the beholding* of them *with their eyes?*] But let us suppose that he useth his Riches; yet it is but a small portion of them that he can enjoy; and as his Estate encreases, the greater Family and Retinue (if he will live like himself) he must maintain; who have a larger share than himself, in the daily provision that is made by his expences. And as for the rest that is not expended (which he calls peculiarly *his*) he hath no other benefit from it, but only that it feeds and entertains his eyes; from which he derives all the true pleasure he hath above them, if he keep a good House willingly, that he sees many continually supported by his Hospitality; but this very thing, if he be covetous, is his torment, that he beholds so many mouths, which eat at his Cost and Charges. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 12. *The sleep of a labouring man* is *sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.*] And as he that tills his Ground, or serves him in any other labour, hath commonly a better appetite, and stronger digestion, and therefore more health than himself; so he sleeps soundly, and is recruited with new vigour against the Morning, whether this supper be small or large: when his rich Master, if he eat sparingly, hath his head so full of cares and fears, or, if he cram himself, hath it so filled with unquiet vapours, that he cannot sleep a wink; or tosses up and down so restlesly, that he is not at all refreshed by it, but by his crudities prepares matter for many diseases. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 13. *There is a sore evil* which *I have seen under the sun,* namely, *riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.*] And, besides all this, there is another thing which is very calamitous, and may rather be called a grievous plague, than a mere affliction; that these very Treasures which men have heaped up, and preserved, with a great deal of care, from thence expecting their felicity, prove in the issue their utter undoing: for I myself have seen some of these miserable men, murthered by their Servants, or by Thieves, nay, by their own Children, that they might be Masters of these Riches; which bring them also, perhaps, at the last, into the same or the like destruction. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 14. *But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and* there is *nothing in his hand.*] Or, if this happen not, these Riches perish (to their no small grief and trouble) by fire; or shipwreck; or bad Bargains; or ill Debtors; or those very crafty practices whereby he seeks to encrease his Estate; or by some other misfortune, or misadventure: so that the Son, whom he thought to have left possessed of abundance of Wealth, hath nothing at all to support a wretched life. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 15. *As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour which he may carry away in his hand.*] These things indeed do not always happen, but this which follows doth; that, tho' he die possessed of all that he hath gotten; yet, he cannot carry one Farthing away with him: but in this, he and the poorest Wretch are both alike, that as he came naked into this World, so he must be stripped again when he goes out of it, and, though his labour hath been great and his Estate no less; yet, it is not in his power, to take along with him so much

much as a Winding-ſheet; but what others pleaſe to beſtow upon him.

Ver. 16. *And this alſo is a ſore evil, that in all points as he came, ſo ſhall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind.*] This is another grievous affliction and ſore torment to Mankind, eſpecially to the Wealthy, that the things, on which they have ſet their hearts, cannot accompany them into the other World; for as the richeſt man that ever was, brought nothing hither, ſo he can carry nothing thither; but muſt leave all that he hath behind him: and then what advantage hath he? what pleaſure? wherein doth he differ from a mere Beggar? But in this only, that he hath taken a World of pains, to no purpoſe; for that which gives no ſatisfaction and which he can hold no more than he can the Wind.

Ver. 17. *All his days alſo he eateth in darkneſs, and* he hath *much ſorrow, and wrath with his ſickneſs.*] And as at Death he can find no comfort in all his Wealth, ſo he took as little perhaps in his life; but dwelt obſcurely, and, denying himſelf even what he had, led ſuch a ſad, melancholly, and ſordid life, that his meat, and his Drink, and the very light itſelf, gave him no pleaſure: for ſuch a man never thinks himſelf happy, but when ſome hope of gain ſhines upon him; and therefore, at other times, he pines, and grieves, and frets, and vexes himſelf, at every thing, that makes an expence, or croſſes his covetous deſires and deſigns; inſomuch that the ſickneſs of the Soul appears in his pale and careful looks, and in his lean and meagre Body; which conſumes and waſtes, even by the ſorrow and ſadneſs, the vexation and diſpleaſure of his mind. *See* Annot. [*o*].

Ver. 18. ¶ *Behold* that *which I have ſeen:* it is *good and comely* for one *to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the ſun, all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it* is *his portion.*] Behold therefore the truth of that Obſervation, which I have made more than once (II. 24. III. 12, 13, 22.) and now repeat again; that it is beſt for a man, and moſt becoming, freely to uſe and enjoy the Riches he hath gotten by his honeſt labours; both for the conſtant ſupply of all the neceſſities of Nature, and for moderate delight and pleaſure, for the entertainment of his Friends, and the relief of his poor Neighbours; and this not for a fit but all the time that GOD is pleaſed to continue him in this World: for this is all that falls to his ſhare; or that can truly be called his part, in the good things of this life; and the only way to prolong his days, and enlarge his portion in them. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Ver. 19. *Every man alſo to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion and to rejoyce in his labour: this* is *the gift of God.*] And whoſoever he be, whom GOD hath bleſſed, not only with plenty and abundance of worldly Goods, but alſo, with ſuch a noble and generous mind, that he is not their Slave, but truly Maſter of them; being able to enjoy them innocently, and to take his full ſhare in them, and that with cheerfulneſs, and delight in doing good to others: let him be very thankful to Almighty GOD for ſo great an happineſs; and acknowledge it to be a ſingular Gift of his Bounty, wherewith he rewards his honeſt labours.

Ver. 20. *For he ſhall not much remember the days of his life: becauſe God anſwereth* him *in the joy of his heart.*] For he that is thus highly favoured by GOD, will not think life tedious or irkſome; but (forgetting all his paſt toils, and taking no care for the future) ſpend his time moſt pleaſantly: becauſe GOD hath given him his very heart's deſire, and he hath attained the ſcope of all his labours; in that inward tranquility of mind, or rather joy and gladneſs of heart, wherewith GOD hath compenſated all his pains, and teſtified his extraordinary kindneſs to him.

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1.] To prevent, or cure that folly mentioned in the *Argument* of the Chapter, he adviſes *three* things about the Worſhip of GOD. The *firſt* of them is in this Verſe; to look to the diſpoſition of their mind, when they go to GOD's Houſe. And this pious diſpoſition of mind, conſiſts alſo in *three* things: *Firſt*, in frequenting the Houſe of GOD, the place where He is worſhipped: *Secondly*, in a reverent behaviour there; ſuitable to the great thoughts we have of GOD, and to the humble ſenſe we have of our own meanneſs: expreſſed, by *keeping or obſerving the feet*, i. e. taking care to put off their Shooes, or Sandals, as the manner was in thoſe Countries; and to go barefoot into the holy places; anſwerable to which now is, *uncovering the head* in our Churches, *&c.* as Mr. *Mede* well diſcourſes, in more places than one, Book II. p. 441, 546. and then, *laſtly*, in a readineſs of the Will to obey all the Divine Precepts as the beſt of Sacrifices: For this is the Sacrifice of wiſe and good men; and all other Sacrifices without this, are but the Sacrifices of Fools and wicked people: who are able, many times to furniſh the Altar with more Burnt offerings, than the beſt of men. But they are ſuch fools as not to conſider, that this very thing encreaſes their guilt; that they imagine GOD will be pleaſed with the Sacrifice of Beaſts, without the Sacrifice of themſelves; in intire

intire obedience to his Will. So our Translation seems to understand the last Clause of this Verse: which may be thus also translated, *For they make no Conscience to do evil.* It is no part of their Religion to abstain from wickedness: but fancying by their Sacrifices they shall atone for that, they do not fear to commit it. To this purpose *Maldonate* expounds it, more plainly than any that I have read.

[b] *V.* 2.] Here he gives the *second* Advice; which is about Prayer, and about Vows to GOD, or (as St. *Hierom* seems to take it, and to which *Melanchon* wholly confines it) about the Doctrines we deliver concerning GOD: which should be very well considered, before we affirm any thing of him. The two first are most proper to the place, especially the latter of them: both which I have comprehended in the *Paraphrase* of this Verse.

[c] *V.* 3.] The reason for the foregoing Precept *(of not using many words)* taken from the consideration of GOD's Greatness and our meanness (v. 2.) together with the inforcement of it in this Verse, is thus explained by St. *Hierom.* He requires us, that whether we speak or think of GOD, we should not venture beyond our ability; but remember our imbecility; and that, as far as the Heaven is distant from the Earth, so much do our thoughts fall short of the excellence of his Nature. And therefore our words ought to be very moderate: for as a man that is full of thoughts, commonly dreams of those things, whereof his head is full: so he that attempts to discourse much of the Divinity, falls into folly. Or rather thus, Our words ought therefore to be few; because even those things which we think we know, we see through a Glass, and *in ænigmate*; and we do but dream of that, which we fancy we comprehend. So that when we have said a great deal (and to the purpose, as it seems to us) the Conclusion of our Disputation is mere folly.

And so much, we may be certain, he suggests unto us, that in a multitude of words spoken unto GOD (as I rather understand it) there must needs be many of them, as idle as mens thoughts are in a Dream. For the *third* Verse sounds thus in the *Hebrew*, *For a Dream proceeds from (or by) a multitude of toilsome business; and the voice of a Fool from* (or *by*) *the multitude of words.* That is, if a man have a multitude of cares in his mind, all the day, they will produce strange, extravagant, or distracted Dreams in the Night: and, in like manner, if a man utter abundance of words, without consideration and due weighing what he saith to GOD, many of them must needs be foolish; whether they be Vows, or whether they be Prayers unto him (or whether they be discourses concerning him; for we may refer it, if we please, to all.) And the sense will not much differ, if that proposition, which we translate *from*, be translated *with*; in this manner, *As Dreams come with a multitude of business* (*i. e.* bring before the mind, in a confused manner, what we have been doing, or thinking of, all day) *so a Fool's voice comes with a multitude of words*, i. e. he utters a great deal of incoherent, confused stuff, *&c.* Or thus, the voice of a Fool comes *in* a multitude of words. And then the sense will run thus: As a multitude of business tires a man, and makes him but dream at last about it (and therefore he had better leave off, before he be unfit to attend it) so when a man enlarges himself too far in his Prayers or Discourses of GOD, he doth but babble in the Conclusion; and therefore had better be shorter.

[d] *V.* 4.] And now follows the *third* Advice, about the *performing* of Vows that have been *made.* Which is double; *first*, not to delay the performance, nor put it off from time to time (which is the Subject of this Verse) lest we be tempted, at last, not to perform our Vows at all; which is the *second* thing: of which he speaks in the next words, *v.* 5. and 6. where he cautions against excuses, which men are apt to make for not being as good as their intentions. *Greg. Thaumaturgus* hath expressed both excellently, in a few words (alluding to the *Hebrew* word שלם which signifies to *complete*) Ἐπαγγελία δὲ ἐυχῆς γινομένη τέλος λαμβανέτω δὲ ἔργῳ. *A promise being made by a Vow, let it receive its perfection* (or *completion*) *by performance:* and that with all speed, as soon as it is due. For a Vow is an imperfect sort of thing till it be made good: it hath only the beginning of a good thing, and wants its finishing; which if it have not, it becomes ugly and odious. For GOD loves not (that is, hates) to be so dealt withal, as if He did either not understand, or not mind what we say to Him: or would put up that affront which the poorest man cannot but resent. Who looks upon himself, as, not only abused but, despised; when men give him fair words, which either have no meaning, or deceive him when he depends upon them. This *Solomon* represents in the 5th Verse as far worse, than promising nothing at all; in which men may be unkind, but in this they are unjust.

[e] *V.* 6.] And he presseth it farther in this Verse; where by *Malach Angel*, there are those that understand that particular Angel, which is supposed by some (but cannot be certainly proved) to attend upon every particular person; others understand the *Priest*, who is God's *Minister*: but I have followed Mr. *Mede*, (Book II. p. 438.) who takes *Angel* here *collectively*, for more than one, as *Tree* is put for *Trees*,

Leaf for *Leaves*, *Gen. III.* 2, 7.) which attended upon the Divine Majeſty in his Houſe, where the Vow, he is here ſpeaking of, was made (*ver.* 1.) Which Angelical Miniſtry in God's houſe was repreſented to the *Jews*, by filling all the Curtains of the Tabernacle with the Pictures of *Cherubims*, Exod. XXVI. 36, 37; and by carving the inſide of the Walls of *Solomon's* Temple, with the ſame, 1 *Kings VI*; and by the Ark of the Teſtimony, being overſpread with two mighty Cherubims (having their Wings lifted up, and their Faces looking down towards it, and towards the Mercy-Seat) called the *Cherubims of Glory*, i. e. of the Divine Preſence, *Heb. IX.* 5. And all to ſignify, that where God's ſacred Memorial is, there the Bleſſed Angels, out of Duty, give their attendance, and therefore the LXX. I obſerve, in this place, inſtead of *before the Angel*, have πρὸ προσώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ, *before the face, or preſence of God*: whoſe Miniſters the Angels were, and before whom the Vows men ingaged themſelves in, being made; they were Witneſſes alſo and Avengers of their excuſes, or of their delays, to make them good.

As for the Vulgar Tranſlation of thoſe words [*it is an error*;] which is this, *there is no Providence*; I have taken no notice of it; becauſe it doth not ſeem to be the genuine meaning: for why ſhould a man make any Vows; who believes no Providence over him; Unleſs we will ſay, that he might alter his Opinion afterwards; and ſo we may put both ſenſes together, thus: *I was in an error, there is no Providence; and therefore I need not trouble myſelf about my Vows.*

[*f*] *V.* 7.] In theſe words he concludes his Diſcourſe about Religion, with a repetition (as ſome take it) of the *third* Verſe: a little varied and enlarged. Which may be thus paraphraſed, according to our Tranſlation: *To ſum up all that concerns this matter; ſince in a multitude of words, as well as Dreams, there muſt needs be much vanity; therefore have a greater reverence of God, than to ſpeak any thing raſhly, or to make larger promiſes to Him, than thou art truly willing to make good.*

In the *Hebrew* the words runs thus: *But from a multitude of Dreams* (or *when Dreams are multiplied*) *both vanity and words are multiplied; therefore fear thou God.* Which may have this meaning; they do but merely dream of God, and are not awakened to a lively ſenſe of Him; who make either thoſe vain excuſes, or thoſe idle promiſes; of which thou may'ſt not be guilty, poſſeſs thy ſoul with an awful dread of his Majeſty. This is exactly agreeable to the *Hebrew*; if we take *vanities* to relate unto the excuſes of ignorance or error before mentioned; and *Words* unto *Promiſes*: and by *multitude of Dreams*, underſtand a great many conceptions concerning God; more like Dreams, than waking thoughts of Him.

Interpreters explain the words many other ways; whom the learned Reader may conſult: I have followed my own conjectures: and ſhall alſo propound another Tranſlation of the words, which ſeem to me very natural and eaſy; which is this: *When, in abundance, Dreams, and vanities, and words, are multiplied, than fear thou God.* That is, have a great care of thyſelf, and let the dread of God over-awe thee leſt thou offend, when thy head is hot and full of Dreams, and vain imaginations; which diſpoſe thee to ſpeak abundantly.

[*g*] *V.* 8.] As the foregoing Verſe concluded his Diſcourſe about Religion; ſo this concludes the *Third General* Head, whereby he demonſtrates the vanity of all things; begun *III.* 16. Which he here admoniſhes us, ſhould not too much diſturb, much leſs quite aſtoniſh us: becauſe GOD will ſet all right, in his due time. So he began it, *III.* 17. and ſo he here ends it, in this Verſe. Which hath ſome difficulty in the laſt part of it; which we tranſlate, *He that is higher than the higheſt*, &c. Word for word, *High above the high obſerveth.* But עליון in *Hebrew*, never ſignifies ſimply *above*; but always *from above*, or *from on high*: and therefore ſo ſhould be tranſlated here, *He that is high, from on high obſerveth.* And then the only Queſtion is, who is meant by the high: whether GOD or his Vicegerent; the King here on Earth. I have expounded it of the latter; becauſe otherways the ſame thing muſt be ſaid over again immediately. Which is not unuſual indeed in Scripture; but where there is no neceſſity of it, and where the words will better bear another ſenſe, they are not to be ſo conſtrued. And the laſt word of the Verſe, will no way be ſo plain; as by referring it, both to the high perſon mentioned before, and to all his inferior Potentates and Judges; whom he obſerves from on high; that is, from his Throne, or from his Seat of Judgment. Where he ought to call them to an account, and examine any complaints that are made againſt them; or if he do not, both he and they are obſerved by the ſupreme Judge of all; and ſhall be accountable to Him, whether they will or no.

[*h*] *V.* 9.] And now he ſeems in this next Verſe, to make a tranſition to the IVth *General* Head (mentioned in the beginning) concerning the Vanity of thoſe, who place their happineſs, in getting and heaping up a great deal of money.

It is an obſcure Verſe, both in its connection, and in ſome of its Phraſes: and therefore is diverſly expounded by Interpreters. To help out the connection, I have made bold to preface a little, and alſo to add ſuch a Concluſion, in my *Paraphraſe* upon it, as I took to be moſt agreeable to what follows, and to what went before. I have expreſſed alſo both ſenſes of the laſt

laſt Clauſe, which we render, *the King is ſerved by the Field*; but may more literally be tranſlated, *the King is a Servant*, (or is, *addicted*) *to the Field*. For anciently the greateſt perſons did not think it below them to follow Husbandry (whoſe juſt praiſes *Cicero* hath given in his *Offices*, but eſpecially in his Book *de Senectute*) as we are taught by the Examples of *Hiero*, *Philometor*, *Attalus*, *Archelaus*, *Cyrus* the younger in profane Story; and by the Example of King *Uzziah* in Scripture, 2 *Chron. XXII.* 10. Which did not at all abate their Courage, or dull their Wit; but only made the one more patient of toil and labour, and the other more ſolid and more ſerious. Whence it is that we find the greateſt Captains among the *Romans*, ſuch as *Camillus*, *Regulus*, *Fabius*, *Cato*, *Cincinnatus*, were fetched from the Plough: as *Gideon* among the *Iſraelites* was from the Threſhing-floor; and *Eliſha* called to the high Office of a Prophet, as he was driving one of the twelve Ploughs, his Father had going in the Field.

And therefore *Maldonate's* Tranſlation of theſe words is not to be deſpiſed; who (and he alone, as I can find) thinks they are capable of being rendred thus: *By following Husbandry diligently, a man may grow ſo rich as to become a King*. *Melanchthon* alone tranſlates the whole Verſe thus, *The King in the Earth, is above all for the Tillage of the Field*. Where *Solomon*, ſaith he, diſtinguiſheth a *King* from a *Tyrant*. A Tyrant depopulates his Country, and lays all waſte; a good King cheriſhes his people, eſpecially honeſt Husbandmen and Farmers: and loves to ſee them thrive, together with all good Arts. The *Vulgar Latine*, I ſuppoſe, aimed at ſomething of this; though it be taken otherwiſe by thoſe that follow it. Agreeable to which is this memorable Paſſage in a *Perſian* Writer quoted by Mr. *Pocock* (in his Notes upon *Abul Feragii*, p. 202, 203.) That "in that Country they kept a ſolemn "Feaſt every Year; wherein the King "deſcended from his Throne, laid aſide "his Royal Apparel, threw away the "Veil from his Face, and converſed with "the moſt ordinary people, even with "the Country Swains and Husbandmen; "with whom he ate, ſaying, *I am one of* "*you; nor can the World ſubſiſt without Til-*"*lage, which is performed by your pains*; and "that Tillage ſubſiſts, it *is owing to the* "*King; ſo that neither of us, being able to* "*ſubſiſt without the other, we are, as it were,* "*individual Brethren.*"

There are thoſe that comprehend Paſturage, as well as Tillage, under theſe words; becauſe the ancient Patriarchs were Shepherds. But there is no need of this; and Husbandry or Gardening was far more ancient: even as old as *Adam*; and after the Flood we find *Noah* thus employed; as *Iſaac* alſo was in ſucceeding times.

[*i*] *V.* 10.] The latter end of this Verſe runs thus in the *Hebrew* Text: *Whoſo loveth* (*viz.* Silver) *reaps no fruit of his abundance*: i. e. doth not enjoy it, as St. *Hieron* expounds it; which is very often the miſerable condition of worldly-minded men.

[*k*] *V.* 11.] The latter end of this Verſe alſo, is capable of contrary ſenſes; which I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe, but ſhall not give an account of it here, becauſe I ſee theſe Annotations already grow too large. For which cauſe I will not note particularly every thing that is obſervable in the following Verſes; but only touch upon ſome of them, under this Obſervation, That he ſeems to demonſtrate the vanity of that ſort of happineſs, which men place in Riches, from *Ten* Conſiderations. The *two* firſt are contained in the *tenth* Verſe, That the deſires of ſuch men are unſatiable; and the more unſatiable they are, the leſs they enjoy of what they have.

The *third* and *fourth* in the 11th Verſe, that if they will enjoy it, the more they have, the more others muſt alſo have of it; and the pleaſure of this is very ſmall; being no more, than to behold a great many people eat and drink at their Coſt.

[*l*] The *fifth*, v. 12, That their Servants commonly ſleep more ſweetly than they. For ſo *Haofed* (which we tranſlate *labouring man*) ſignifies *one that ſerves*; that undertakes work for another; or any way *miniſters* unto him.

[*m*] The *ſixth*, That their Riches expoſe them to the danger even of their life; by poyſon, or by open violence, *v.* 13. Where the firſt words *Rai chole*, *ſore evil*, import ſuch an evil *as makes one ſick*, when he thinks of it; eſpecially when he fears it. For the *Hebrew* word *Chalah* always carries in it the Notion of *Sickneſs* and *weakneſs*; and that ſometimes accompanied with *pain* and *torment* (as in the caſe of *Hezekiah*, Iſa. XXXVIII. 1.) and proceeding from a deadly wound; as in the caſe of *Ahab*, 1 Kings XXII. 34. It may therefore be tranſlated here a *tormenting* or a *deadly* evil, or an evil that *diſables* a man, and makes him ſo feeble and languiſhing, that he is unfit for any thing. For the LXX. frequently render the Noun that comes from hence, ἀῤῥωστία: See *v.* 17. of this Chapter.

[*n*] And *ſeventhly*, Though they eſcape theſe dangers, there are many other ways whereby their Riches may be loſt; which ſeem to be included in that Phraſe, *v.* 14. *injan ra*, *an evil buſineſs*, *or matter*. Which may ſignify, as well the way of their periſhing; as that they periſh with the great *grief* and affliction of him that loſeth them. Whether that *way* be, by their very merchandize in the way of their Trade; or

by

by their own frauds and ſubtilties in Traffick, whereby they over-reach themſelves; or laſtly, by other accidents, as we call them; ſuch as Fire, Storms, &c.

And then follows the 8th, That he leaves his Son a Beggar; which is no ſmall trouble to them both; he having bred his Son in expectation of an Eſtate, which never comes to him; or if it do, neither Father nor Son can enjoy it longer than their lives, *v.* 14, 15. Which is the *ninth* thing: if their Riches do not leave them, they muſt leave their Riches, *v.* 16.

[*o*] And whilſt they live (which is the laſt, *v.* 17.) they ſpend their time, perhaps either in filthy luſts (as *Gregory Thaumaturgus* underſtands thoſe words, *eateth in darkneſs*) with vile Harlots; or in wretched niggardice, and ſuch ſordid penuriouſneſs that the *Miſer* even eats up himſelf; taking no joy, no comfort in any thing that he poſſeſſeth. So *darkneſs* ſignifies, being oppoſed to *light* in Scripture, which denotes joy and gladneſs: and thus the LXX. here explain it by adding a word, *in darkneſs and in mourning*. It may refer alſo to his diſmal habitation (to which I have had reſpect in the *Paraphraſe*) in ſome by place, where he hopes no body can find him; or in a Room, whoſe Windows are ſhut up and barred for fear of Thieves.

The laſt Clauſe of this Verſe, runs thus word for word in the *Hebrew*; *Sorrow is multiplied* (or *there is much ſorrow*) *and ſickneſs, and wrath*: the force of which I hope I have expreſſed in the *Paraphraſe*: and ſhall only note, that the firſt word *ſorrow* (as was obſerved Chap. I.) includes in it *indignation*, together with heavineſs; and the next word *ſickneſs*, includes in it *pain* and *anguiſh*, as was obſerved before: and the laſt word (*ketzeph*) *wrath* denotes the higheſt commotion of that ſort. For being applied to the Sea, it ſignifies ſuch a boyling rage, as makes it foam. There is another word indeed which we render *hot diſpleaſure*: but this is joined with it (*Pſal.* XXXVIII. 1.) as equivalent to it, or the effect of it.

[*p*] From all which he concludes this Chapter, as he had done his Diſcourſe upon the foregoing Subjects, with this Meditation (which ſome call *ſententia intercalaris*) that the greateſt Bleſſing a man can enjoy in this life: is, to have an heart to uſe what GOD hath given him, for his own honeſt pleaſure; with due acknowledgments to GOD, and charity to others, *v.* 18, 19, 20. Where (*v.* 19.) there are two words to expreſs *abundance of worldly goods*, as I have paraphraſed them. The laſt of them *nekaſim* is larger than the former, comprehending all manner of Goods (Cattel and all) which a man gathers together. For it ſeems, by a tranſpoſition of Letters, to be derived from *kanas* to *collect* or *gather* (*Chap.* II. 8.) from which comes the Latin word *cenſus*; the *revenues*, which a man is eſteemed to have, and accordingly is rated and pays Subſidies.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The firſt ten Verſes, at leaſt, of this Chapter, are a continuation of the ſame Argument he handled in the latter part of the foregoing: And therefore ought to be connected with it. For they ſet forth the vanity of Riches, in the poſſeſſion of a covetous Wretch: who only increaſes the number of unhappy men in this World; being never the better for any thing he enjoys, as he ſhews in the Concluſion of the Chapter.

Ver. 1. [*THERE is an evil which I have ſeen under the ſun, and it is common among men:*] But alas! this Divine benefit, tho' above all others, is coveted by very few: for I have obſerved this moſt wretched, miſerable humour reigning among Mankind; which, though it be the greateſt miſchief is grown ſo common, that it hath overſpread the face of the whole Earth. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he deſireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a ſtranger eateth it: this* is *vanity, and it is an evil diſeaſe.*] When a man is bleſſed by GOD, with ſuch abundance of Money and Goods, and heighth of Honour, that he need not, unleſs he will, want any thing which his largeſt deſires can wiſh ſhould adminiſter to his pleaſure; yet ſo great is his ingratitude to GOD, and his uncharitableneſs to men, that for theſe and other ſins, GOD, denies him the power to enjoy theſe Gifts of his Bounty; to which he is a Slave, rather than their Maſter: for he poſſeſſes them, as if they were not his own, but kept by him, for ſome body elſe; and thoſe not his Children, nor his Kindred, but a mere Stranger perhaps; who (either in his life-time, or after he is dead) devours all that he hath ſaved. What can be more ſenſeleſs than this? Nay, what ſorer Plague can infeſt Mankind? *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. ¶ *If a man beget an hundred* children, *and live many years, ſo that the days of his years be many, and his ſoul be not filled with good, and alſo* that *he have no burial, I ſay,* that *an untimely birth* is *better than he.*] Unleſs it be this that one of this ſort of men, being bleſſed alſo with abundance of Children, and with an exceeding long life; yet thereby

thereby is made only ſo much the more, and ſo much the longer miſerable: being ſo ſolicitous for poſterity that he hath no heart to take the comfort of any thing he poſſeſſes at preſent; no, nor ſo much as to take order for his decent Funeral, when he is dead; but he goes out of the World without any notice that he hath lived in it. Of ſuch an one I pronounce, That an Abortive, which came into the World before its time, is not ſo deſpicable as he. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *For he cometh in with vanity, and parteth in darkneſs, and his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs.*] For though in this they are both alike, that they come into the World to no purpoſe; and go out of it ſo obſcurely, that no body minds their departure; and leave no memory behind them, that they have been in it. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Moreover he hath not ſeen the ſun, nor known* any thing: *this hath more reſt than the other.*] Yet in this they differ, that an Abortive, having never ſeen the light of the Sun, much leſs been acquainted with any thing in this World, had no deſire to enjoy that of which it was perfectly ignorant, and was as utterly inſenſible of grief and pain, as it was of joy and pleaſure: Whereas this man's unſatiable deſires, carrying him after every thing he ſees, torment his Soul with anxious thoughts, care and labour; which not only make him pine away with grief for what he cannot get, but deprive him of the comfort of what he hath. And how much better is it, never to live at all, than to live only to diſquiet a man's ſelf with reſtleſs ſolicitude of mind, and toilſome pains of body: for that which he can neither keep, nor part withal, with any contentment?

Ver. 6. ¶ *Yea, though he live a thouſand years twice told, yet hath he ſeen no good: do not all go to one place?*] Men are ſo fond of life indeed, that becauſe the one lives long, and the other not at all, they imagine the former to be incomparably more happy: but let us ſuppoſe this covetous Wretch to live more than as long again, as the oldeſt man that ever was; what is he the better for it, when his greedy deſires, not ſuffering him to enjoy his Goods, multiply his miſeries equally to his years? Which will expire alſo at laſt, and then, what are his Riches able to do for him? can they privilege him from going down into the Grave, and rotting there like the Abortive? *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 7. *All the labour of man* is *for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.*] And while he lives, to what purpoſe is his reſtleſs labour? Seeing if he deſire only what is neceſſary, it is eaſily provided; and having Food and Rayment, a man may be contented: and if he extend his deſires farther, they are infinite; and therefore can never meet with any ſatisfaction.

Ver. 8. *For what hath the wiſe more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?*] For let a man be otherways, never ſo wiſe as well as rich, yet if he bridle not his deſires he is little better than a fool: and he that is poor, but hath ſo much underſtanding, as to know how to behave himſelf among men ſuitably to his condition, and to be be contented therewith, is incomparably the wiſer, and the happier man. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 9. *Better* is *the ſight of the eyes, than the wandring of the deſire: this* is *alſo vanity and vexation of ſpirit?*] It being much better to enjoy what a man hath at preſent, than to live upon the hopes of that which his ravenous deſires continually purſue: which ſure, is a very fooliſh thing, and another great part of the miſeries of humane life: that men are ſtill craving more, when they know not how to uſe what they have already; and neglecting what they poſſeſs, wiſh for that, which perhaps they cannot get; or if they do, can give them no more ſatisfaction than what they poſſeſs. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 10. *That which hath been, is named already, and it is known that it* is *man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.*] And what if a man have already arrived at great renown (as well as Riches) ſtill it is notorious, that he is but a man, made out of the Duſt: and therefore weak, and frail, and ſubject to many diſaſtrous events: which it is not poſſible for him, by his moſt anxious cares, to prevent or, by his Power and Wealth, to throw off when he pleaſes. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 11. ¶ *Seeing there be many things that increaſe vanity, what* is *man the better?*] And ſince there are ſo many things, and of great conſideration, that add to the natural uncertainty which attends all worldly enjoyments, what can a man promiſe himſelf from all his cares? and how frivolous are his hopes? And how ſenſeleſs are they, when they will not ſuffer him to enjoy any thing, for fear of diminiſhing that heap, which they would fain encreaſe? *See* Annot [*b*].

Ver. 12. *For who knoweth what* is *good for man in* this *life, all the days of his vain life which he ſpendeth as a ſhadow? for who can tell a man what ſhall be after him under the ſun?*] For (beſide all that hath been ſaid) there is this great miſchief will ſtill remain; that if he ſhould attain his hopes, he cannot tell, whether it would not have been better for him to have been diſappointed: for alas! what man is there that hath skill enough to know, whether that eminent ſtation (for inſtance) to which he aſpires, will prove ſo good for him, as the private condition wherein he is? and the ſame doubt may be made of

all other things, which he desires in this short life: which passes away insensibly, but very swiftly; and ends in the like uncertainty, what shall become of a man's Family and Possessions, which he leaves behind him, when he departs out of this World. *See* Annot. [*i*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1. *common*] Covetous Wretches, it seems, were no rare Creatures in those days, but the Nation of the *Jews* abounded with them; being of the same humour they are now, scraping up Riches by right or wrong, which they scarce ever enjoy. But I have expressed also the other sense of the word *Rabba*, which signifies *great*: (Gen. VI. 5.) as well as *many* or *frequent*.

[*b*] *V.* 2. *riches*, &c.] He describes in this Verse the ridiculousness, as well as the misery, of this penurious humour; by the example of a man who wants nothing, and yet wants all that he hath; being like one that stands up to the Chin in Water; but fears to take a sip to quench his thirst. For to those two words, *riches* and *wealth* (mentioned in the 19th Verse of the foregoing Chapter) he here adds a third, to express the greatest plenty, *viz. Glory*. Which is more comprehensive than the other; including in it all those goodly things, which may do a man credit, and raise him to a splendid condition in this World. For so *Laban*'s Sons call the ample Possessions which *Jacob* had got in their Father's Service, *all this glory* (Gen. XXXI. 1.) or *substance*, as some render it: which made him (as we now speak) a *substantial man*; for it denotes any thing that hath *weight* in it, and makes a man to be *valued*.

Evil Disease] That which was called *Rae cholah*, a *sore evil*, Chap. V. 13, 16. is here called *choli ra*, an *evil disease*, *sad sickness*, or *grievous torment*. Which is only an inversion of the words, the same sense being still preserved.

[*c*] *V.* 3. *days of his years*, &c.] He seems to represent in this Verse an higher degree of that *evil disease*, by the example of one, who hath not only great store of money, and lands, and honour; but also abundance of Children; and such firm health, that he lives to a great Age. Which is expressed by two Phrases which we translate thus, *live many years, so that the days of his years be many*: but to avoid tautology, the latter Clause should be thus translated, *and the days of his years be abundantly sufficient*: so many, that he cannot reasonably expect, or desire more. For thus *rab* signifies in many places, where we translate it enough, *Gen. XXIV. 25. straw and provender enough*: Gen. XXXIII. 11. *I have enough, my Brother*. And yet this man thus abundantly provided for a long happiness, doth no good either to others, or to himself, with what he possesses: but grutches even the expences of a Funeral, after he can hold his Riches no longer. So I understand those words, *he have no burial*. Which are generally understood, I confess, of lying neglected, without any interment: which the *Hebrews* (every one knows) look upon as a great Judgment: (See *Jer. XXII.* 19.) and so *Anton. Corranus* glosses upon these words: *By the just Judgment of* GOD, *such Wretches, who would not feed the poor while they lived, become the Food of Dogs, or Crows when they are dead.*

[*d*] *V.* 4. *he cometh in*] is born.

With vanity] or *in vain, to no purpose*. Which some refer to the *covetous* Wretch, others to the *abortive*, before-named: but I have referred to both. For this makes the clearest sense; if in the next Verse (*v.* 5.) we suppose that he compares these two together, and prefers the latter before the former; as he plainly doth in the conclusion of it.

[*e*] *V.* 6. *sees no good*] To *see*, is to enjoy, as the Phrase is used in many places: particularly *Levit.* XX. 17. S. *John* XVII. 24. And the sense of this Verse is, That the *life* of a covetous man is so far from making him happier, than he who never lives at all; that if he should live as long again as *Methusalem*, he would only be so much the more wretchedly miserable. For when he hath tired himself with labour, he hath not taken one step towards satisfaction: which he might have had with less pains, if he had taken the right course to it, *ver.* 7.

[*f*] *V.* 8. *what hath*] There is so great a difficulty in this Verse, that I did not know how to connect it with the foregoing; but by taking the latter part of the Sentence, as if *Solomon* had said, *What comparison is there between him* (viz. the man before-named) *and the poor that knows how to walk before the living?* i. e. the poor man, who hath so much skill, as to know to live well, is infinitely to be preferred before him; whose Wisdom still leaves him such a Fool, that it doth not restrain his superfluous appetites. And this suits well with the next words, (*v.* 9.) where the *sight of the eyes*, being opposed to the *wandring of the desire*; it is reasonable to take it for the fixedness of a man's mind, to rest satisfied in what is before him: that is, in things present.

Or the words may admit of this construction (which is come into my mind, since I wrote the *Paraphrase*.) *What excellence is there in the Wise man* (that is, in the opinion

nion of the Wretch before-mentioned, there is none) *more than in a Fool, especially if he be poor*, &c. That is, to all other miseries of the rich Churls, that is commonly added, That they are very ignorant of what is most truly valuable; having no esteem of the wisest man in the World, no more than of a Fool. Nay, they prefer a rich Fool, before a poor Wise man: who knows how to carry himself so decently, that he is not afraid to appear before any man living. This is a great sottishness (*v.* 9.) and breeds no less sorrow; to be led by blind Appetites, and not by Reason and Judgment. For so the words of the *ninth* Verse, may be interpreted: *Better it is to understand aright, than to follow after one's desires.*

[g] *V.* 10. *That which hath been*] The sense that I have given of the beginning of this Verse (taking the first word for an Interrogation, and *name* for renown, as is common in Scripture) seems to me to be the most simple; and most agreeable to the whole Discourse. And it is that which *Melancthon* hath expressed in these words, *Altho' a man grow famous, yet it is known that he is but a man; and he cannot contend with that which is stronger than himself.* That is, he cannot govern events. But I shall mention two other Interpretations, which some give of it. One is this, *As he was made at first, so his Name was given him*; i. e. the Name of *Adam*, signifying that he was taken out of the Earth, and therefore mortal. The other is this; *He that hath been, his Name is called already*; that is, his Memory is abolished together with himself. This is *Maldonate*'s sense; but is not agreeable to the *Hebrew* Phrase, his *Name is called*; for that in the Scripture signifies rather the contrary, *viz. fame*, and honourable mention, as I have expressed it word for word out of the *Hebrew*, in the *Paraphrase*. The common Interpretation may be found in all Commentators, which is this; That GOD *hath appointed what every man shall be; whether rich or poor*, &c. *and therefore it is in vain for them to contrive as they do, to be other than what they are.* For it is to endeavour to alter that which is immutably settled by the Almighty.

[h] *V.* 11. *seeing there be*] This Verse sums up all this matter about Riches; or, as others will have it, the whole foregoing Discourse, concerning all those *four* things, wherein men place their happiness: whether *Wisdom, Pleasure, Honour*, or *Wealth*. Which draw so *many*, and so *great* (for the *Hebrew* word includes both) inconveniences along with them; as sufficiently demonstrate a man is still to seek for the satisfaction of his desires, if he look no farther.

And so they would have the last Verse, to be an Introduction to the following Discourse in the next Chapter: where he shews, wherein that true and solid happiness lies, which Mankind vainly pursue in the forenamed enjoyments. But I have connected it with what goes before in this Chapter: as the Particle *(for)* in the beginning of it, shews it ought to be.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Having discoursed, in the foregoing part of the Book, of the vain courses men take to make themselves happy; he now seems to proceed to prescribe the best remedies that can be found, against that vanity to which we are subject: by setting down many wise Precepts for our direction, and conduct, support, and comfort in a troublesome World. Where, it is confessed that, our happiness can be but imperfect; yet so much we may attain as to be well satisfied, and not vex ourselves that we cannot make things more certain and constant; nor dispose men to be more just and equal to us than they are.

And if we examine the following Particulars *we shall find they are comprehended this in* General *Direction*; the change of our mind, thoughts and opinions: *which must be quite altered; so that those things which now look like* Paradoxes, *must be judged the greatest Wisdom. Such are all the Doctrines that begin this Chapter (quite opposite to the common Opinions of the World) That* a good name is to be preferred before precious Ointment, and the day of one's death, before one's birth-day: mourning before feasting; sadness before laughter; rebukes before commendations; the end of a thing before the beginning of it; a patient suffering spirit, before a stout haughty mind; Wisdom before riches, *&c. These and such like are the Maxims of true Wisdom and Piety, which must be learnt; in order to the settlement of our minds in peace and tranquillity: notwithstanding the vanity that is in all things.*

Ver. 1. A Good *name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.*] But though there be such uncertainty in all other things, yet a Good Name, which a man gets by a vertuous life, is lasting and durable: And as the Conscience of well-doing gives a greater pleasure to the mind for the present

ſent, than the moſt fragrant Ointment can do to the Senſes of voluptuous men, ſo the fame of it will remain after he is dead; and he will ſtill live in a good report, when all thoſe ſenſual joys expire, like the vapour of the Ointment, which is ſoon diſperſed, and loſt after it is poured out: And therefore if we would be happy, we ought to order our life in ſuch a manner, that Death, which Fools and wicked Men fear, may be welcome to us; and only let us out of the troubles, into which we are brought at our birth. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. ¶ It is *better to go to the houſe of mourning, than to go to the houſe of feaſting; for that* is *the end of all men, and the living will lay* it *to his heart.*] And, that it may befriend us, it is our Wiſdom to think often of it; and conſequently, chuſe rather to converſe with things that will make us ſerious, than with thoſe which will make us merry: to go, for inſtance, into the Company of thoſe, who are mourning for the dead, rather than of thoſe, who are feaſting for joy that a Child is born into the World: For in the midſt of thoſe pleaſures we are apt to be diſſolute and to forget ourſelves; but that ſad ſpectacle inclines us naturally to be conſiderate, and diſpoſes our mind to humility, modeſty, gentleneſs, ſobriety and charity: when, in one we ſee the fate of all; and we follow him to his Grave, who a little while agone, perhaps, was as vigorous and ſtrong as ourſelves. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *Sorrow* is *better than laughter: for by the ſadneſs of the countenance the heart is made better.*] Sadneſs, therefore, and ſorrow, is much more profitable for us than mirth and jollity (as we ſee in thoſe ſevere and ſtern rebukes, which make men ſorrowful for their faults) becauſe that grief which makes a man look ſadly, whether it be for his own ſins, or other mens calamities, is apt to do his Soul good; by giving him a right underſtanding of GOD, and of himſelf, and of all things elſe. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *The heart of the wiſe* is *in the houſe of mourning; but the heart of fools* is *in the houſe of mirth.*] Whence it is, that Wiſe men affect to think of ſuch things, when they do not ſee them, as ſhow them how vain all our worldly enjoyments are: but Fools ſeek all occaſions to put by ſuch thoughts, and to divert themſelves with merriment and pleaſure. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. It is *better to hear the rebuke of the wiſe, than for a man to hear the ſong of fools.*] And he that would be in the number of theſe wiſe men, muſt look upon this as one of the firſt ſteps towards it, to lend an obedient ear unto the reproofs of him who is truly wiſe and vertuous: which, though never ſo ſharp and rough are to be infinitely preferred before the ſmooth praiſes and commendations of a great many Fools? nay, ought to ſound more gratefully in our ears, than the moſt delicious Muſick, Songs and Jeſts, of all the merry Companions in the World. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, ſo* is *the laughter of the fool: this alſo* is *vanity.*] Theſe jolly Fellows indeed make a great noiſe and ſhow; as if they were the only men that enjoy this World: but alas! their mirth and joy is but for a ſpurt, and then ends in heavineſs: like the crackling of Thorns, which ſometimes blaze under a Pot, as if they gave a mighty heat; but leave the Water in it, as cold as they found it.

All their jollity therefore is mere vanity. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. ¶. *Surely oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad, and a gift deſtroyeth the heart.*] And there is the greater need to be well inſtructed, and therefore to hearken to the wiſe (*v.* 5.) becauſe there are other things beſides vain pleaſures and flatteries, to diſturb and unſettle our minds, if we be not well fortified againſt them. For the better any man is, the more he is in danger to ſuffer from ſlanderers, revilers, and all ſorts of injurious perſons: whoſe violence ſometimes is ſo great, that unleſs a man be provided with more than human Wiſdom (and it be deeply rooted in his heart) it will not only miſerably diſquiet, but even diſtract him. Nor is this his only danger; but that Power and Authority, which raiſes him above the former, may expoſe him to another; unleſs he be armed with great integrity: for his mind may be corrupted by Gifts and Preſents to do injuſtice unto others; which he hates ſhould be done to himſelf. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *Better* is *the end of a thing than the beginning thereof:* and *the patient in ſpirit* is *better than the proud in ſpirit.*] And he will be the better able to reſiſt them both, who is ſo wiſe as to look, not merely to the beginning of them, but attend to their concluſion: For that which ſeems grievous at the firſt appearance, in the iſſue proves very advantageous; and on the contrary, that which promiſes fair at firſt hath a deadly farewel with it; and therefore it is much better to endure patiently, and humbly wait to ſee the iſſue, than to be provoked by pride and diſdain, haſtily to precipitate events; for he that ſcorns to wait and attend upon the leiſurely progreſſion of things, commonly undoes himſelf and his Affairs, by his fierce and violent attempts preſently to compaſs his deſires. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 9. *Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to be angry: for anger reſteth in the boſom of fools.*] It is another Point therefore of that Wiſdom, which muſt make us happy, to repreſs the motions of anger that we feel in ourſelves,

ourſelves, and not ſuffer them, without great deliberation, to have any effect: for anger is an enemy to counſel and advice, and is indeed the property of Fools; who out of weakneſs of mind, and ſhortneſs of thoughts, are familiarly tranſported with it, upon the ſlighteſt cauſes; and not eaſily appeaſed again, as wiſe men are when they chance to be incenſed.

Ver. 10. *Say not thou, What is* the cauſe *that the former days were better than theſe for thou doſt not enquire wiſely concerning this.*] It is Wiſdom alſo to correct in ourſelves, that complaining humour, which is apt to be ever finding fault with the preſent times, and commending the foregoing Ages, as far better and happier than the preſent. For perhaps it is not true; and thus much is certain, that he is fooliſhly inconſiderate who imagines, that *then* there was no evil and that *now* there is no good: or if it be true that there was more good in thoſe times, let us not murmur and repine, asking why we are caſt into a troubleſome Age, full of oppreſſion, ſuppoſe, and violence, and wrong (*v.* 7.) but rather ſubmit to the Providence of GOD; conſidering, that there is no Age ſo bad, as to hinder us (which is the principal point of Wiſdom) from being good: and therefore let us do our Duty; believing GOD hath ſuch reaſon for ſuffering the times to be as they are, that we have no reaſon to quarrel at them; or to call in Queſtion his Wiſdom, Goodneſs or Juſtice. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 11. ¶ *Wiſdom* is *good with an inheritance: and* by it there is *profit to them that ſee the ſun.*] Yet do not think that Wiſdom or Vertue conſiſts in deſpiſing Riches; but only, in uſing them well when we have them, and in being contented without them; for as we cannot be happy by Riches alone, without Wiſdom, ſo we cannot be completely happy with Wiſdom alone, without Riches: For he hath a vaſt advantage to do good every way, who is Rich as well wiſe; it giving him an authority, even to ſpeak more freely than other men; and making what he ſpeaks to be more regarded: but, of the two, Wiſdom and Vertue muſt alway be preferred; which can do greater things, and beſtow nobler benefits upon mankind, than Treaſures alone can do. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 12. *For wiſdom* is *a defence*, and *money* is *a defence: but the excellency of knowledge* is, that *wiſdom giveth life to them that have it.*] For as Wiſdom, for inſtance, contrives many ways, whereby a man may innocently defend himſelf from danger; ſo can money oft-times purchaſe his protection and ſafety: but herein is the preheminence of Wiſdom, that when neither of them can ſhelter a man, nor ſtave off the calamity that invades him, it marvellouſly ſupports, revives, and comforts the Souls of thoſe who are owners of it, under all the evils which it could not help them, by honeſt means, to avoid. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 13. *Conſider the work of God: for who can make* that *ſtraight which he hath made crooked?*] And in order to it, the higheſt Piece of Wiſdom is, to live in a ſerious ſenſe of the Sovereign Power of GOD; and to conſider, that as he hath ſettled all things in Heaven and Earth, in an unchangeable courſe, ſo nothing comes to paſs without his Providence: with which it is in vain to ſtruggle, when he is pleaſed either to croſs us in any of our private deſigns; or to ſend any publick calamity, which by all our Art and Power we can neither avoid nor remedy. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 14. *In the day of proſperity be joyful, but in the day of adverſity conſider: God alſo hath ſet the one over againſt the other, to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him.*] No, we ought rather to accommodate ourſelves to the preſent ſtate of things; and when we are in proſperity, to enjoy GOD's Bleſſings cheerfully, with thankful and charitable hearts; but ſo ſoberly alſo, as not forgetting that affliction may come: and when it doth, let us take it patiently, conſidering, among other things, that there may be a change to a better condition again: For as both the one and the other come from GOD, ſo he hath ordered they ſhould have their turns, in ſuch due ſeaſon, and balanced one with the other with ſuch exactneſs, that the meaneſt man hath no reaſon to complain of him; nor the greateſt to fancy himſelf more than a man; who cannot invent any means, to diſpoſe things otherwiſe, much leſs, better, than GOD hath done. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 15. *All* things *have I ſeen in the days of my vanity: there is a juſt* man *that periſheth in his righteouſneſs; and there is a wicked* man *that prolongeth* his life *in his wickedneſs.*] I know what may be objected to this having, all my life long, made Obſervations upon all manner of things, in this troubleſome World) and it ſeems very hard that a juſt man's integrity, ſhould not be able to preſerve him; but he is therefore, perhaps, deſtroyed, becauſe he is better than others; when a wicked man eſcapes, nay is countenanced and encouraged; or ſuffered to prolong his days in (and perhaps by) his wickedneſs. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 16. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyſelf overwiſe: why ſhouldſt thou deſtroy thyſelf?*] But beſides other things which may be replied to this (as that good men are ſometimes removed from, and wicked reſerved unto, future evils) it muſt be noted alſo, that ſome pious men are more ſtrict and rigid than they need, and not ſo prudent as they ought to be; but un-

neceſſarily expoſe themſelves to danger: And therefore it is good advice, in order to a ſafe and quiet paſſage through this life, to be temperate in thy zeal, and not to overdo; either by extending thy own Duty beyond the Divine Commandment; or by correcting the inveterate vices of others, and oppoſing the vulgar Opinions, too ſeverely or unſeaſonably; whereby they are only exaſperated and enraged, but not at all amended: for why ſhould a man bring a miſchief upon himſelf, without any benefit unto others? *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 17. *Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou fooliſh: why ſhouldeſt thou die before thy time.*] And on the other ſide, let not impunity tempt any man to preſume to grow enormouſly wicked; and fooliſh as to embrace and follow the lewdeſt Opinions: for this may awaken the publick Juſtice againſt him, even for the common ſafety; or the divine Vengeance, nay, his own exceſſive wickedneſs, may cut him off, before he come to the natural term of his life. *See* Annot. [*o*].

Ver. 18. *It is good that thou ſhouldeſt take hold of this, yea alſo from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God ſhall come forth of them all.*] The Advice is ſo profitable, that he who loves himſelf will not only apprehend it, but take faſt hold of it and diligently obſerve it; never departing from either part of it, but while he wiſely manages himſelf to decline dangers, honeſtly and faithfully perform his duty: for nothing can do a man ſuch ſervice in this as a true fear of offending the Divine Majeſty; which will preſerve him both from raſh and heady forwardneſs, and from conſulting merely his own private ſafety and intereſt. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Ver. 19. *Wiſdom ſtrengtheneth the wiſe, more than ten mighty* men *which are in the city.*] And this pious prudence, which proceeds from the fear of GOD, will be a ſtronger Guard and ſecurity, to him who is indued with it, both againſt all inward fears and all outward dangers, than a multitude of valiant Commanders, and all their troops are, to defend a City, when it is beſieged by its Enemies. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Ver. 20. *For* there is *not a juſt man upon earth, that doth good, and ſinneth not.*] Though this muſt always be underſtood, when we thus diſcourſe that no man is either ſo perfectly wiſe, or completely vertuous, as never to miſtake and commit a fault; but ſometimes the beſt of us may ſlip into a ſin, notwithſtanding all our caution and care; and thereby fall into danger. *See* Annot. [*q*].

Ver. 28. *Alſo take no heed unto all words that are ſpoken; leſt thou hear thy ſervant curſe thee.*] The conſideration of which frailty of Mankind, is uſeful many ways; not only to abate our ſeverity in cenſuring or chaſtiſing publick Offenders, but to teach us gentleneſs towards thoſe, who do us private injuries: and therefore not to regard (for inſtance) every word that is ſpoken againſt us, but rather to diſſemble our knowledge of it; *firſt*, becauſe otherwiſe we ſhall have no quiet; for perhaps we may chance to overhear our own Domeſticks ſpeaking ſlightly of us; which we may eaſily paſs by and overlook, but cannot take notice of without great diſturbance. *See* Annot. [*r*].

Ver. 22. *For often times alſo thine own heart knoweth, that thou thy ſelf likewiſe haſt curſed others.*] And *ſecondly*, Becauſe if thou examineſt thy own life, thou wilt find this fault is ſo incident to human Nature, that thou thyſelf perhaps haſt been guilty of it many a time; and done as much by others that are thy Betters, as thy Servant doth by thee.

Ver. 23. ¶ *All this have I proved by wiſdom: I ſaid I will be wiſe, but it* was *far from me.*] For my part, I cannot exempt my ſelf from the guilt of great errors: for though I have not only ſtudied to be wiſe and vertuous, but made a tryal of the excellence of all theſe rules, which I have now delivered; and reſolved alſo that I would ſtrictly obſerve them, and never, in the leaſt, ſwerve from them; yet, alas! I fell far ſhort of theſe holy purpoſes. *See* Annot. [*s*].

Ver. 24. *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?*] That which I have done already, in time paſt, is far from the Wiſdom, whereby I intended to have acted; and who can tell, when he once ſinks below himſelf, how much deeper and deeper he ſhall be plunged in ſin, till he cannot find his way out again?

Ver. 25. *I applied mine heart to know, and to ſearch, and to ſeek out wiſdom, and the reaſon* of things, *and to know the wickedneſs of folly, even of fooliſhneſs and madneſs.*] Notwithſtanding which I did not ceaſe my endeavours, but diligently looked every where, and viewed every Corner, even of my heart; making the moſt exquiſite ſearch after the ſureſt means to attain that Wiſdom and Vertue, which I deſired and laboured for above all things; and to be ſettled, upon firm Grounds, in my holy Reſolutions: for which end, I likewiſe endeavoured to underſtand, what is the very height of folly and wickedneſs; even that wickedneſs which beſots a man's mind, nay, turns his brain; and not only infatuates him, but makes him act as if he were diſtracted.

Ver. 26. *And I find more bitter than death the woman whoſe heart* is *ſnares and nets,* and *her hands* as *bands: whoſo pleaſeth God, ſhall eſcape from her, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her.*] And I found at laſt, that nothing ſo deſtroys

ſtroys a man's underſtanding, nothing leads him into ſo many dangerous errors, and makes him quite forget himſelf, as that filthy luſt which carries him to a Harlot; who brings him into ſo many grievous miſchiefs, that he had better die than be acquainted with her: for ſhe is made up of wicked arts and wily devices, and doth nothing but contrive how to inſnare and intangle him, that approaches her; whom ſhe holds ſo faſt by her charms, that he remains her Priſoner for ever, without a wonderful Grace to deliver him: which he hath little reaſon to expect, when he conſiders, that it is commonly ſome other great offences againſt GOD, that betray him into theſe Snares; from which, he who approves himſelf ſincerely unto GOD, find ſo much favour with Him, as to be preſerved. *See* Annot. [*t*].

Ver. 27. *Behold, this I have found (ſaith the preacher)* counting *one by one, to find out the account:*] Behold then the reſult of my moſt ſerious thoughts, which I publickly proclaim to all, and would have it diligently obſerved; that, having diſtinctly conſidered all things, one by one, I find nothing ſo dangerous and therefore nothing ſo much to be avoided by him, that would be ſtedfaſtly wiſe and good, (*v.* 23.) as the converſation of Women; eſpecially thoſe that are of a lewd inclination.

Ver. 28. *Which yet my ſoul ſeeketh, but I find not: one man among a thouſand have I found, but a woman among all thoſe have I not found.*] And where to meet with any of them, with whom it is ſafe to have Society, I am ſtill to ſeek, though very deſirous to find: for though here and there I have found a truly honeſt Man, among thoſe multitudes that attend upon me in my Court, yet I cannot ſay that among all my Acquaintance of the other Sex (and I have a great many, 1 *Kin.* XI. 1.) I have met with ſo much as one, that is what a Woman ſhould be; modeſt, plain-hearted, humble, ſincerely vertuous, without guile, hypocriſy and diſſimulation. *See* Annot. [*u*].

Ver. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions.*] Only obſerve this, that I do not herein accuſe (far be it from me) the Creator of the World; for I am aſſured of nothing more than this, That as GOD made all other things very good in their ſeveral kinds, ſo He made both Men and Women in perfect integrity; with a clear underſtanding to judge aright, and with an honeſt will, inclined to do accordingly; preſcribing them alſo no other Rule of life, but ſuch as was juſt and good: but they, affecting to be greater than GOD intended, and to have more liberty than He allowed, raiſed ſcruples and doubts, queſtions and diſputes about their Duty; inventing many ways to ſhift it off; and ſo depraved themſelves, by following their own vain fancies, and falſe reaſonings, rather than his bleſſed Will. *See* Annot. [*x*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Among all the Maxims of true Wiſdom and Piety, which are to be learnt, for the ſettlement of our mind in peace and tranquillity, notwithſtanding the *vanity* that is in all things, *Solomon* recommends to us in the firſt place; the care of that, which men fooliſhly loſe; by minding nothing but heaping up Wealth, or pleaſing themſelves in a voluptuous life, *&c.* viz. *to acquire a good Name.* Which nothing but a vertuous uſe of all things, can beſtow upon us; and when we have it, will give us a ſingular delight at preſent, and embalm our memory when we are laid in our Graves.

Which good Name (as *Melanthon* obſerves) conſiſts in *two* things: in the approbation of our own Conſciences judging aright, and in the approbation of other men, who alſo rightly judge. Both which are required by GOD; that we ſhould do right things, and that others ſhould approve of what is rightly done. Unto which they are bound, for *two* Reaſons; that the difference of Vertue and Vice may be the more conſpicuous; and that others may be taught by Examples. He requires therefore that infamous perſons be caſt out of Society, and that they be honoured, whoſe manners are without infamy. Now ſince ſuch an approbation is a Divine Ordinance, it is manifeſt we may deſire this Glory; and, by the ſame reaſon, that we muſt avoid all ſcandal, and take care that we may be commended.

Which *Solomon* here compares to a precious Ointment, becauſe nothing was more grateful and refreſhing in thoſe Eaſtern Countries: and therefore uſed not only in Feaſts, but at other times, when they were weary or languiſhing; for comforting the brain, recreating the ſpirits, chearing the countenance, ſuppling the joints; and for other ſervices tending to health, as well as pleaſure. Which made Ointments to be held in the greateſt price and eſtimation, and to be mentioned among the Treaſures of Kings, 2 *Kin.* XX. 13. *Iſa.* XXXIX. 2. Suitable to this is that of *Pindar*, *A Bath of warm Water doth not ſo refreſh the tired Bones, as Glory.* And this of *Thucidydes*, That *Honour is the nouriſhment and food of an old man*; who lives upon the reputation he hath gotten by worthy Deeds, which will make Death not unwelcome to him. So the latter part of this Verſe muſt be underſtood, with

with reference to a well ſpent life; for otherways it would be only a diſcontented Saying, like that of the Heathen, *The beſt thing is not to be born, the next beſt to die preſently.* Unto which Doctrine (as *Melanthon* well ſpeaks) the Church is a Stranger.

I cannot well paſs over this Verſe, without obſerving what all Interpreters note; an elegant *Paranomaſia* (as they call it) that is, a near affinity both in the Letters and and in the ſound, of theſe two *Hebrew* words *Schem* Name, and *Schemen* Oil or Ointment; as there is afterward, *v.* 5, 6. between three other words, *Shir* a Song, *Sirim* Thorns, and *Sir* a Pot. Which being found alſo in ſeveral other parts of the *Bible*, it ſhews that ſuch alluſions are not unſeemly, nor ought to be cenſured as affectations; if they be ſparingly uſed, and wiſely, gravely and decently ſcattered in a Diſcourſe; not fulſomely, upon every occaſion, obtruded.

[*b*] *V.* 2.] Now the Wiſe man knowing that nothing ſtirs us up more powerfully to a religious life, than the frequent remembrance of our mortality (which alas! we are not willing to think of) he next adviſes him that would be happy, to embrace all occaſions that may put him in mind of it. *The Meditation of Death*, being as was anciently ſaid, *the very Abridgment of all Philoſophy.* All the Precepts of Wiſdom, they thought was comprized in this; and therefore no wonder *Solomon* not only begins with it, but preſſes it ſo largely as he doth in the following Verſes: to the end, that we may make our life not only a *Meditation*, but an *Exerciſe* of Death; which in the Chriſtian Language is called *Mortification.* In ſhort, the thoughts of Death will, without any other Teacher (if we keep it always in mind) inſtruct us in all thoſe Vertues, which will procure us a Good Name; ſome of which I have touched in the *Paraphraſe.* And the more healthful we are, the more we had need to charge our ſelves with the thoughts of it, becauſe that is apt to make us forget it. So I have taken *chai*, not merely for *living*; but *lively*, vigorous, luſty and flouriſhing, as we tranſlate it truly, *Pſal. XXXVIII.* 19.

[*c*] *V.* 3.] In the Explication of this Verſe, I have touched upon another ſenſe of the firſt word of it כעס: which ſignifies not only *ſorrow*, but anger or indignation alſo: by which ſome expound this Verſe. And underſtand thereby, either the anger of God afflicting men for ſin, or the angry reproofs that are given Sinners: which are better for them than proſperity, or to applaud and humour them in their folly. But this is mentioned *v.* 5. and therefore I take it not to be intended here.

The truth of the latter part of this Verſe is admirably explained by St. *Paul* in 2 *Cor. VII.* 11. As for the Phraſe I ſhall only note, that *an ill look* is an exact Tranſlation into our Language, of the *Hebrew* Phraſe, which is here tranſlated *ſadneſs of the countenance.* Now a man may *look ill* not only by ſickneſs, but, by reaſon of any other thing that afflicts him (as we find in the Caſe of *Nehemiah*, *II.* 2.) ſome of which I have expreſſed in the *Paraphraſe.*

[*d*] *V.* 4. *Heart.*] The thoughts, affections, and delight.

[*e*] *V.* 5. *Rebuke*] The word includes *roughneſs* and ſeverity in it; and is oppoſed to the ſmooth flatteries of thoſe, that ſeduce to ſin. So I have underſtood *Song* (not excluding the common ſenſe of the word, which I have alſo expreſſed) for as the firſt part of Wiſdom, is for a man to be able to give good advice to himſelf and others; and the next part of it, to take ſuch advice when it is given: So it belongs to the firſt part, to ſee a man's own faults and reprove himſelf for them; and to the *ſecond*, to receive ſuch reproof willingly from others, and to abhor to be flattered and ſoothed, as if he had no faults at all.

[*f*] *V.* 6.] This compariſon between rebuke and flattery, *Corranus* thinks is continued alſo in this Verſe; upon which he paraphraſes in this manner: *As thorns put under a Pot, and kindled, make ſuch a crackling, as if they would ſet the whole houſe on fire, and by their noiſe raiſe an expectation of the greateſt flame; but preſently end in ſmoke and vapours: ſo ſenſeleſs Flatterers make a great buzzing in mens ears, and blow up their minds, extolling them to Heaven with their Praiſes; but in truth make them not one whit the better*, &c. But I do not ſee how the word *laughter* can be well applied to this; and therefore I have omitted it, and only thought fit here to mention it.

[*g*] *V.* 7.] The connexion of this Verſe with the preceding, is a little obſcure; unleſs we tranſlate it, as *Maldonate* doth (following *Munſter*) *A wiſe man deſpiſeth calumny, and a mind that can be corrupted with Gifts*: which is an excellent Admonition, and well ſuited to *Solomon*'s purpoſe. But no Interpreters beſides them take the word *Jeholel* in the ſignification of *deſpiſing* (except *Forſterus*, who takes it for making one deſpiſed, tranſlating it thus, *Calumny makes even a Wiſe man inglorious*) but rather in the ſenſe of *giving diſturbance*, or *making mad*, as we tranſlate it. Though a great many by *Oſchek* (which raiſeth this diſturbance in a Wiſe man) underſtand that ſort of oppreſſion, which comes from calumny. Particularly *Melanthon*, herein follows the *Vulgar*; ſhewing what a moſt peſtilent miſchief this

this is, in all Governments: whereby ſuch excellently deſerving perſons as *Palamedes*, *Ariſtides*, *Cimon* and *Themiſtocles* were oppreſſed. The fountain of which Vice, is pride, envying the glory of others; and, that they may leſſen it, miſrepreſenting their counſels and actions: Which ſophiſtical depravation of other mens words, and deeds, is called *Calumny*.

But I have not confined the ſenſe to this; the *Hebrew* word *Oſchek* ſignifying all ſorts of oppreſſions, as I have noted before, either by fraud or by force. And the eaſieſt ſenſe of the Verſe ſeems to me, that which I have expreſſed in the *Paraphraſe*; by connecting it with *ver.* 5. as a reaſon why we ought to hearken even to the rebukes of the Wiſe; that we may acquire a good habit of mind, able to hold out againſt oppreſſion on the one hand, and bribery on the other: which none can do, who is not very vertuous.

And in this Expoſition I have taken *Wiſe* as St. *Hierom* doth; not for one that is *perfect*, but for a *Proficient*: who hath not yet ſettled wiſe Principles in his mind.

It is poſſible alſo that *Solomon* may have reſpect to the oppreſſions which men generally endure, in a State ill governed. Which raiſes a juſt indignation, and holy warmth of zeal in the beſt of men: but if care be not taken to repreſs the violence of that perturbation, which this is apt to give us, it may turn into fury; and make us behave ourſelves towards our Superiors, as men out of their Wits.

[*b*] *V.* 8.] I have connected this Verſe with the foregoing; though it may be taken alone by itſelf. And the word *dabar*, ſignifying either *ſpeech* or thing, ſome following the *Vulgar*) interpret this of the care that ought to be taken, in the *Epilogue* or cloſe of an Oration (as St. *Hierom* ſpeaks) rather than in the beginning or Preface to it; that, as we are wont to ſay, we may come off well, and leave a ſting in the minds of thoſe that hear it. But this is ſo wide from the Wiſe man's purpoſe, that I do not think fit to ſet down an excellent Diſcourſe of the Lord *Bacon*'s, upon this ſenſe of the words, Lib. VIII. *de Augum. Scient. Parab.* 10.

And if we expound it of *things*, it is but a dilute ſenſe to ſay, that *a thing perfected is better than a thing begun.* Others therefore take it to be the ſame with that, *Finis coronat Opus*: which is true, but doth not complete the ſenſe; unleſs we underſtand it in this manner; that the *Concluſion of all things is to be expected, before we judge of them.* For whilſt they are growing and coming on, they appear with a quite different face, from what they have, when they are gone and ſhall be no more.

In the latter part of the Verſe, *patient in Spirit*, is properly one that is long before he grows angry, or falls into any paſſion; who is oppoſed to *proud in ſpirit*; becauſe it is *high-mindedneſs* (as the word ſignifies) which makes mens paſſion riſe and ſwell haſtily. It may have relation to the former part, and be expounded in this manner: *A patient man and ſlow to anger diſpatches buſineſs better, than a proud, huffing and bluſtering Spirit: whoſe paſſion ſo diſorders his mind, and indiſpoſes it for the management of Affairs, that he ſeldom brings them to a good iſſue.*

Or thus; *A proud man is a Boutefeau, who begins the fray: but the patient in ſpirit is the man that muſt end it (if ever it be well ended) and that is much the better work, and the greater honour to him, who is employed in it, and effects it.*

Or, which is ſtill clearer, we ought to attend to the end of a thing with patience: becauſe it cannot be known what it will prove, nor whither it tends, in the beginning: and we ſhould be the more prone to be patient in ſpirit, if we would expect the iſſue of every thing. Thus *Corranus* paraphraſes upon the words moſt excellently; but a little too long. *It is no ſmall part of Wiſdom, to judge of things, and of buſineſs propoſed to us ſlowly and maturely, &c. for we ſee frequently that inconſiderate men, finding a thing very hard and difficult in the beginning, and never thinking how profitable and pleaſant the iſſue may prove, immediately deſpond; and out of an impatience, ſhall I ſay, or raſhneſs of mind, deſiſt from the moſt excellent Enterprizes; and many times betake themſelves to worſe. From which raſhneſs, and inconſtancy he will be very far removed, who endued with Divine Wiſdom, waits for the deſired and happy Concluſion of his Affairs. And unto this nothing contributes more, than a ſlow, conſtant and patient mind, that can endure labour and pains: which ſtedfaſtly and quietly conſidering how fruitful the end may be which he affects, will not ſuffer himſelf by any difficulty, trouble or wearineſs which he meets withal in the beginning, to be drawn from his purpoſe. Far different from thoſe, who out of a proud, arrogant humour, think it is baſeneſs, and unbecoming a gallant man, to attend upon the ſlow and leiſurely progreſſes of things, and to expect their events.*

Thus he; which ſenſe I have not neglected in my *Paraphraſe*; but comprized it, among the reſt; and it is thus, in part, expreſs'd more briefly by a wiſe and good man in that Age; when he told his Friend (who was undone becauſe he would not mind it) that *he was an like unskilful Player at Tennis, ever running after the Ball; whereas an expert Player will ſtand ſtill to obſerve and diſcern, where the Ball will light, or where it will rebound; and*

there with ſmall travel will let it fall on his Racket, or on his hand.

[i] *V.* 9, 10.] Theſe two Verſes depend on the foregoing, ſhewing that *anger* is inconſiſtent with Wiſdom; and ſo is *murmuring* and repining at the hardſhip we meet withal in evil times. And therefore, as the ſame *Corranus* well gloſſes, *let us not throw the cauſes of our anger upon the times*; but blame ourſelves, who at all times, if we want *meekneſs of Wiſdom*, ſhall grow angry upon the moſt frivolous occaſions; and not only let looſe the reins of our Anger, but of all other Vices.

But I think this Advice, *v.* 10. is not merely to be reſtrained to this, but extended unto all ſorts of diſcontent, which are apt to make us complain of our preſent condition; and ſo to admire what is paſt, as not to mind what is preſent: as if they had nothing but what was good, who lived before us; and we nothing but what is naught, in theſe days. Whereas, they complained juſt as we do now; and that of *Thucidydes* was true then, as it ever will be ἀεὶ τὸ παρὸν βαρύ, *the preſent is always burthenſome.* Becauſe as *Melanchthon* obſerves, we have a feeling ſenſe of preſent incommodities; but know what was heretofore only by report: and ſo we praiſe thoſe ancient times, but do not like our own; which may be as good. This we are ſure of, that all *times have their troubles:* and it is the part of a wiſe and good man, to bear them, and not to increaſe them by a fooliſh Cure. According to that Saying, μὴ τὸ κακὸν ἰῶ κακῷ: *let not one evil be remedied by another.* And that of *Pythagoras*, ὧν ἂν μοῖραν ἔχῃς φέρε μηδ' ἀγανάκτει: *What portion of things fall to thy ſhare, take it; and do not grumble, nor be vexed at it.* And remember, as *Corranus* gloſſes again, that *a truly wiſe man is never ſo tranſported with admiration of ancient times, as to deſpiſe the preſent; crying out thoſe were the Golden, theſe the Iron Ages: nor will he ſolicitouſly enquire into the Cauſes of what was then, and what is now; when this is certain, that Vertue is the only cauſe of Happineſs, and Vice of Infelicity; which, in what time ſoever we fall, always produce the ſame effect.* And to imagine that the ancient times had no evil in them, and ours no good, is the conceit of a man that judges inconſiderately. For our eyes ought not to be ſo fixed upon the preſent calamities of our days, as blindly to overlook all the good: nor is the ancient felicity to be ſo admired, as not to remember, that they alſo conflicted with many Tempeſts, and perhaps greater than we, as their frequent complaints of their times do abundantly teſtify. He therefore that is wiſe and fears GOD, will make account (as the truth is) that it is in our own choice, by his Grace, whether the times ſhall be good or bad; for if he live well, they cannot be bad to him; as on the contrary, they cannot be good, if he live wickedly.

I am the longer in theſe Obſervations, becauſe they are things of mighty moment: but moſt of the reſt I ſhall contract, as much as is poſſible.

[k] *V.* 11.] Moſt take this Verſe, as denoting their happineſs, who have Riches, as well as *Wiſdom*; which commonly is deſpiſed without *Wealth.* But the words may bear another conſtruction (which I have not neglected, becauſe it agrees well with what follows) that *Wiſdom is equal to an Inheritance; nay, much to be preferred before it.* For they may be thus tranſlated, *Both Wiſdom and an Inheritance are profitable for men in this world; but eſpecially Wiſdom.* Or, as *Maldonate* renders the laſt Clauſe, *Et Reſiduum eſt videntibus Solem*, and there is a remainder to thoſe that ſee the Sun. That is, when all things in this World fail us, the fruits of Wiſdom only remain with us.

[l] *V.* 12.] This is farther explained in this Verſe: Where it will be needleſs to do more than barely obſerve, that the word we render *defence* is *ſhadow* in the *Hebrew*; which in their Language ſignifies protection, and comfort, *Gen. XIX.* 8. *For this cauſe, they came under the ſhadow of my Roof*; i. e. that they might be ſecure from violence. *Numb. XIV.* 9. *Their ſhadow* (i. e. protection) *is departed from them.*

[m] *V.* 13, 14.] Here follows an admirable Advice, to comply with our preſent condition, and ſuit our mind unto it: Becauſe we cannot bring things to the bent of our own mind, and therefore had better ſtudy to conform our mind to our condition, whatſoever it be; whether proſperity or adverſity. Into which the Divine Wiſdom hath divided our life, and ſo proportioned them one to the other; that none can juſtly find fault with his Divine diſpoſal; nor, all things conſidered, tell how to mend them, or order them better.

So I have underſtood the laſt Clauſe of *v.* 14. in which is the only difficulty: *find nothing after him.* Which words *(after him)* ſome refer unto God, and make the ſenſe to be, that *after Him* (or beſide Him) *a man ſhall find nothing certain*: and therefore it is beſt to depend upon Him alone. Which I have not taken notice of in the *Paraphraſe*, and therefore mention here. Others refer *after him*, unto man; and that *two* ways (which it may befit juſt to ſet down.) Some tranſlate it thus; *For this end, that man may find out none of thoſe things; which ſhall befal him hereafter:*

hereafter: and ſo, being perfectly ignorant of what is to come, neither preſume in proſperity, nor deſpair in adverſity. Others thus; (which is *Maldonate*'s Gloſs) *That a man loſing in time of adverſity, what he had gotten in proſperity, might not adhere too much to the things of this World. Melancthon* alone interprets *find nothing*, in this ſenſe, *that he might not betake himſelf unto unallowed courſes*: but in proſperity keep himſelf within the Bounds of his vocation, and not be carried beyond it by vain curioſity; and in adverſity expect the help of GOD, in the uſe of ſuch remedies as He hath ordained.

[n] *V.* 15.] This Verſe may either be joined with the precedent, or with the following: I have connected it with both, in my *Paraphraſe* upon it, and *v.* 16. where I have attended to the Scope of the Wiſe man in this Chapter; and accordingly interpreted that and the ſeventeenth Verſe; which will admit of ſeveral other Expoſitions.

They are commonly expounded of Publick Juſtice; which ought to be, neither too rigid, nor too remiſs and negligent. Inſomuch that *Melancthon*'s words are, *non dubium eſt*; there is no doubt he ſpeaks of Political Juſtice, which governs the things of this life: and conſiſts in a mean, between cruelty and negligence. Too much ſeverity becomes cruelty; as it was in *Aurelian*: and too much indulgence confirms men in wickedneſs, as it was in the days of *Arcadius*. A good Governor, like *Auguſtus*, takes a middle courſe; and doth not ſeek that middle with too much ſubtilty: but rather, as in GOD, lets mercy prevail over judgment. The like admonition, ſaith he, is ſubjoined about Wiſdom: for, as too much ſeverity becomes cruelty, ſo too much Wiſdom, that is, ſubtilty, becomes cavilling ſophiſtry, and cheating. And thus he interprets *v.* 17. that a Magiſtrate ſhould not tolerate enormous Vices.

Dr. *Hammond* alone, as far as I have read, makes the ſixteenth Verſe, *Be not righteous over-much*, &c. to be the Objection of a Worldling; who takes that for an exceſs of Duty, which brings any damage, or worldly deſtruction upon him. Which is anſwered, ſaith he, in *v.* 17. *Be not wicked over-much*, &c. that is, the fears, and from thence the prudential (but oftentimes very impious) practices of the Worldling, are the more probable Path, to the moſt haſty ruins. *Vid.* Anſw. to *Cawdry*, Chap. 2. Sect. 2.

But this is not coherent, in my Opinion, with the reſt of the Chapter; and therefore I have followed rather the Opinion of *Gregory Nazianzen*; who interprets it of heat and zeal, more than needs, without reaſon and diſcretion: Which, as it makes all the Schiſms in the World, ſo produces a great many other evils. And the ſame paſſion, ſaith he, is both about righteouſneſs, and about Wiſdom: Θερμότης περὶ ἀμφότερα τὸν λόγον, ἐξ ἴσου κακὰ, &c. *Vid. Orat. XXVI.* p. 446.

I ſhall omit other Interpretations (which are collected by *Delrio*, and more copiouſly by *Hackſpan.* Lib. II. *Miſcellan.* c. 1.) and mention only that of *Grotius*: who expounds it of a vain affectation of Juſtice and Wiſdom. Which Interpretation is in part followed by the Lord *Bacon*, L. VIII. *de Augment. Scient.* Cap. 2. Parab. 21.) whoſe Diſcourſe upon the words, I ſhall not ſend the Reader to ſeek, but ſet it down intirely; becauſe it is very uſeful. "There are times, ſaith *Tacitus*, "wherein great Vertues are expoſed to "certain ruin. And this fate befals "men eminent for Courage, or Juſtice; "ſometimes ſuddenly, ſometimes foreſeen "afar off. But if *Prudence* be alſo added "to their other accompliſhments; that "is, if they be wary and watchful over "their own ſafety; then they gain thus "much, that their ſudden deſtruction "proceeds from counſels altogether hid-"den and obſcure; by which both envy "may be avoided, and their ruin fall "upon them unprovided. As for that "*nimium (over-much)* which is ſet down "in the *Parable* (ſince they are not the "words of ſome *Periander*, but of *Solomon*, "who now and then notes the evils in "mens lives, but never commands them) "it is to be underſtood, not of Vertue "itſelf (in which there is no *nimium*) but "of a vain and inviduous affectation, "and oſtentation thereof.

"A Point ſomething reſembling this, the "ſame *Tacitus* intimates in a Paſſage "touching *Lepidus*; ſetting it down as "a Miracle, that he had never been the "Author of any ſervile Sentence, and "yet remained ſafe in ſuch cruel times." *This thought*, ſaith he, *often come into my mind; whether theſe things be governed by Fate; or whether it lies alſo in our own power, to ſteer an even courſe, free both from danger and from indignity, between deformed flattery, and abrupt and ſullen contumacy.*

[o] *V.* 17.] *There are thoſe, who by* al tirſha *underſtand not*, Be not too wicked; *but*, Be not too buſy; make not too great a ſtir, and buſtle about the things of this World (eſpecially in dangerous times) do not deſtroy thyſelf, by too much toil and labour; or by too much ſtirring, when it is better to be quiet and ſit ſtill. Of which I have taken no notice in the *Paraphraſe*; and therefore mention it here. For though the word be not uſed commonly in this ſenſe, yet it is its original ſignification.

ſignification. And the Advice of the Son of *Syrach* is ſomething to this purpoſe, *Eccleſ. VII.* 6, 7.

[p] *V.* 17.] The foregoing Advice he looks upon as ſo uſeful, that he preſſes it farther here, *ver.* 18. and promiſes more ſecurity from ſuch a religious prudence, as teaches us moderation, and yet keeps us ſtrict to our Duty; than from the greateſt Armies that men can raiſe for their defence, *ver.* 19.

For (as *Melanchon* obſerves) *Alex. Pheræus* was ſlain by his Wife, and his Brethren; though he lay in an high Tower, well garriſoned, to which none could aſcend but by Ladders. And the Father of *Alexander* was ſlain in the midſt of a publick Pomp, his Princes and his Guards looking on; as *Julius Cæſar* alſo was in the Senate.

Ten mighty men] every one knows is, in Scripture-Phraſe, as much as *many* mighty men. And ſo *Bochartus* interprets that difficult place, *Numb. XI.* 31. where ſpeaking of the vaſt quantity of Quails that came into the Camp, *Moſes* ſaith, he that gathered leaſt, gathered *ten* homers; that is, ſaith the forenamed Writer, *many* heaps: for ſo he thinks *homer* ſhould be there tranſlated, as it is in ſome other places, L. I. *de Sacris Animal.* Cap. XV. p. 106. Part II.

[q] *V.* 20.] Here he ſeems to limit what he had ſaid before, with this exception; that *no man can be always ſo wiſe and cautious, as never to offend.* Which *Melanchon* truly calls *Politica ſententia:* and refers to lapſes in Government; like that of *Joſiah*; who was a very good Prince, but periſhed by engaging raſhly in an unneceſſary War. And therefore the Character of a Governour, as well as of a man, muſt be fetched from the conſtant ſtrain, and bent of his actions; and not from particular facts. For he is a good Governour that always intends to do right, though he ſometimes miſcarry (as *David* and the forenamed *Joſiah*) and he is an ill Governour, who hath no ſuch deſign, but quite contrary; though ſometimes he do well, as *Cambyſes.* The difference therefore muſt be taken from their perpetual will and inclination.

There are thoſe who connect this Verſe, with the next rather than the foregoing: but I have referred it to both, and not unfitly I think; as may be ſeen in the *Paraphraſe* upon *v.* 21.

[r] *V.* 21.] Which the Lord *Bacon* (L. VIII. C. 2. Parab. 4.) refers principally to vain curioſity; and thus diſcourſes upon it. "It is a matter almoſt beyond be-"lief, what diſturbance is created by "unprofitable curioſity, about thoſe "things that concern our perſonal in-"tereſt: That is, when we make a too "ſcrupulous inquiry after ſuch Secrets, "which once diſcloſed and found out, "do but cauſe diſquiet of mind; and "nothing conduce to the advancing of "our deſigns. For *firſt* there follows "*vexation and diſquiet of mind:* human "Affairs being ſo full of treachery and "ingratitude, that if there could be pro-"cured a Magical Glaſs, in which we "might behold the hatreds, and what-"ſoever malicious contrivances are any "where raiſed up againſt us, it would "be better for us, if ſuch a Glaſs were "forthwith thrown away and broken in "pieces. For things of this nature, are "like the murmurs of the leaves of "Trees, which in a ſhort time vaniſh. "*Secondly, This curioſity loads the mind too "much with ſuſpicions,* and ungrounded "jealouſies: which is the moſt capital "Enemy to counſels; and renders them "inconſtant and involved. *Thirdly,* The "ſame curioſity doth ſometimes *fix thoſe "evils which otherways of themſelves would "paſs by us and fly away.* For it is a dan-"gerous thing to irritate the conſciences "of men; who, if they think themſelves "to lie undiſcovered, are eaſily changed "for the better; but, if they perceive "themſelves to be detected, drive out "one miſchief by another. And there-"fore it was deſervedly eſteemed the "higheſt Wiſdom in *Pompey the Great;* "that he inſtantly burnt all *Sertorius*'s "Papers, unperuſed by himſelf, or ſuf-"fered to be ſeen by others."

Some take this Verſe to ſpeak of thoſe, who willingly lend their ears to Informers and Detractors; who will bring them what is ſaid abroad, whether true or falſe. And therefore, ſaith *Solomon*, ſince there is no man but who offends ſometimes, not thou thyſelf excepted, do not hearken unto thoſe who reckon up other mens faults; leſt thou hear thy own, from thoſe that are of thy Family. Thus *Maldonate.*

[s] *V.* 23.] Here he ſeems to reſume his Diſcourſe, in the beginning of the Book, concerning the ſhortneſs of humane underſtanding; and the difficulty of finding the truth and the reaſon of things. But no account can be given, why he thus ſtarts from his Subject, on a ſudden, without any coherence. And therefore I have endeavoured to give another account of this, and the following Verſe: Which I have ſo interpreted, that they may be knit to the foregoing, I cannot ſay that herein I have followed any Guide, but my own Judgment: which led me to think this to be a continued Diſcourſe. But they that diſlike my connection,

nection, muſt reſt ſatisfied (as far as I can ſee) with that of *Corranus* (which hath more colour for it, than any other) who takes this Verſe to be a Preface to what the Wiſe man had to add concerning the ſubtil Arts of Women to draw men in, if they be not exceeding cautious. Their wits being ſo verſatile, their cunning ſo ſly, and their allurements ſo many, that he profeſſes he found them inexplicable; though he had ſpared no pains to penetrate into them. This he makes the ſenſe of *ver.* 23, 24, 25.

[*t*] *V.* 26.] And then in this Verſe, *Solomon* gives an account of the danger they are in, who ſuffer themſelves to be inſnared by the Arts of naughty Women (who are ſo numerous, that he adviſes him, who would be good, to be very cautious how he enters into familiarity with that Sex) who have brought ſore calamities upon the greateſt men; ſuch as *Sampſon*, *David* and *Paris*, and many other beſides *Solomon* himſelf. The next Verſe I have made to relate to that.

The two words we tranſlate *ſnares* and *nets* (to which he compares her *heart*, i. e. her invention, devices, *&c.*) both ſignify *nets*. Only the former ſignifies the Nets of *Hunters*; the latter, the Nets (or *Draggs* rather of *Fiſhermen*, Ezek. XXVI. 5.) as the LXX. diſtinguiſh them. The former indeed is applied alſo to *Fiſhes*, in this Book, *Chap. IX.* 11. and therefore the truer difference perhaps is, that the former ſignifies *finer*, the latter *coarſer*, but ſtronger *Nets*: ſuch as cannot be broken, but will certainly deſtroy; as the *Root*, from whence *Cherem* comes, denotes. Both theſe words are in the *Plural* Number to denote, the vaſt multitudes that they catch; and the innumerable ways they have to entangle them, and hold them faſt.

[*u*] *V.* 28.] *Gregory Thaumaturgus* interprets this Verſe altogether of their Chaſtity; after this manner: *I have found a chaſte man, but never a chaſte woman:* And, indeed, of that he is ſpeaking, which makes this ſenſe not unreaſonable: though I have not ſo reſtrained it, nor do I think this is to be looked upon, as the true Character of Women, in general, in all Ages, and Countries; but of ſuch only as *Solomon* was acquainted withal; and of thoſe in that, and the neighbouring Nations; eſpecially of Women there excelling in beauty, which commonly betrayed them to their ruin, and to the ruin of others; without an extraordinary Grace to preſerve them.

[*x*] *V.* 29.] In the beginning of this Verſe, *Melanchon* thinks, *Solomon* ſpeaks not of the firſt creation of man, but of the Rule of mens actions, which GOD propoſed to them: The ſenſe being, as if he had ſaid, GOD *inſtituted a good Order how men ſhould behave themſelves in all things; but they contrive how to go beyond their Bounds.* As *David*, for inſtance, had many Wives of great Beauty; but he would not be content without another man's. *Antony* had a great Power, but he would be a Monarch: which is the fault of many other Great Men.

This I have not altogether neglected; and alſo taken notice of *de Dieu's* Interpretation of the laſt words of the Verſe, *Men ſought out the thoughts of the great or mighty:* taking *Rabbim* for *Magnates*. That is, not contented with his own condition, *be affected to be like the Angels, nay, like God.* *Maimonides* refers it to the evils and miſeries man draws upon himſelf, here in this world: underſtanding by *cheſchbonoth* (*inventions*) man's fooliſh reaſonings, whereby he precipitates himſelf, into all the evils he endures. "For he thinks "he wants this and that, when he doth "not: and he thinks this and the other "thing makes him miſerable, which hath "no hand in it. But we may ſay, as *Ma-*"*lachi* doth (*Chap.* I. 9.) *This hath been by* "*means of your ownſelves*; and as the Wiſe "man elſewhere (*Prov. XIX.* 3.) *The* "*fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way; and* "*his heart freteth againſt the Lord.* *More Nevochim.* Pars III. Cap. 12.

The common Editions of the LXX. may be corrected out of *Epiphanius* Hæreſ. XLIX. who quotes this Verſe thus—Θεὸς συνετὸν ἀνθρωπον (in the common Editions, even in the *Polyglott Bible*, it is σὺν ἀνθρωπον, moſt abſurdly) ἐπεῖνεσε ἐυδοκῶν αὐτοῖ δὲ ἐζήτησε πολλὰς ἐμπλοϊς ἐδὸς. According to which I have, partly, framed my *Paraphraſe*, taking συνετὸν to refer to the Underſtanding, and ἐυδοκῶν to the Will: But I have attended alſo to the common reading, in the latter end of the Verſe; which is, not ἐδὸς, but λογισμὸς.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter the Wiſe man purſues the deſign of the former. Wherein he having given ſeveral Advices, as a proper remedy for the vanity and trouble we find in all things (the principal of which are ſeriouſneſs, mindfulneſs of our mortality, integrity, meekneſs, patience, prudence, *in not exaſpe-*

rating men when we can avoid it, caution in converſation with Women) *he now adds ſeveral other of no leſs moment; which have reſpect not only to private, but alſo to publick perſons. And they amount to this (that I may give as ſhort a Summary as I can of the Chapter) to ſhew how happy we all ſhould be, if both Subjects, and princes alſo would be adviſed and conſiderate. But if they be not, good men ſhould make themſelves leſs miſerable, by not being either too much diſturbed at it, or giving any publick diſturbance; much leſs by diſbelieving providence, though they do not ſee the World governed, as they would have it, to the encouragement of the good, and the puniſhment of the bad: but to enjoy what they can honeſtly, in the preſent condition wherein they are: and be contented and ſubmit to the Divine Government (though we do not underſtand it) when any alteration comes: and not add this affliction unto all the reſt anxiouſly to enquire into thoſe things, of which we are not able to give an account.*

Ver. 1. WHO is *as the wiſe* man? *and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wiſdom maketh his face to ſhine, and the boldneſs of his face ſhall be changed.*] There is no man ſo happy, as he that is wiſe enough to underſtand, and to live by theſe Rules: But let that man remember alſo, that as true Wiſdom gives the greateſt comfort, confidence and courage to himſelf, ſo it is apt to make him kind and gentle unto others; And therefore let no man pretend unto it, unleſs it diſpoſe him unto ſuch Vertues: For the deeper inſight he hath into men, and buſineſs, and things, and the better able he is to ſolve all doubts and difficult Caſes, and thereby ſatisfy both himſelf and other men; the more friendly, courteous and affable ſhould he be to all; and the more humble, meek and gentle alſo: Which is far more Majeſtical, and will gain him greater reverence, than auſterity, ſurlineſs, and pride. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *I* counſel thee *to keep the king's commandment and* that *in regard of the oath of God.*] And let no man think I have reſpect merely to myſelf, in what follows, becauſe I am a King; but look upon this as a principal Point of Wiſdom, both for his own, and the publick ſafety; to live in dutiful Obedience to the King's Edicts, and Commands, which do not thwart the Laws of GOD: and that not merely for fear of his diſpleaſure, and the penalty of the Law, if it be broken or neglected; but out of reſpect to GOD, whoſe Miniſter he is; and whom his Subjects called to witneſs unto the ſincerity of their hearts, when they ſwore true faith and allegiance to him. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *Be not haſty to go out of his ſight; ſtand not in an evil thing, for he doeth whatſoever pleaſeth him.*] Let not thy paſſion tranſport thee to ſhew the leaſt diſreſpect to him, much leſs to refuſe his Commands unmannerly, or to do any thing that may throw thee out of his favour; but, if thou haſt offended him, let thy next care be not to perſiſt obſtinately in the error, but to humble thyſelf and beg his pardon: not imagining thou canſt flee ſo faſt from his anger that it ſhall not reach thee; for his power is ſo large, that it will, one time or other, lay hold on thee and puniſh thee. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *Where the word of a king* is, there is *power: and who may ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?*] For the King's Commands are backed with Power; ſo that if he give Sentence againſt thee, his Officers are ready to do Execution immediately; never examining whether it be right or wrong but holding themſelves obliged to do as he bids them. And indeed who may queſtion him, or call him to an account that hath no Superior? Or who can controul him, that hath all the power of the Kingdom in his hands? *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Whoſo keepeth the commandment ſhall feel no evil thing: and a wiſe man's heart diſcerneth both time and judgment.*] Therefore, not only for Conſcience ſake, but, for thy own ſafety and ſecurity yield obedience to the King's Commandment; for ſo thou ſhalt avoid the trouble both of thy mind and of thy body: and if thou pretendeſt to Wiſdom, ſhew it, not in oppoſing him and contending with him, but in a prudent declining what thou canſt not honeſtly do; and in obſerving and taking the fitteſt Seaſon, and in the moſt inoffenſive and winning manner, to inſinuate good advice, when the King commits an error. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. ¶ *Becauſe to every purpoſe there is time, and judgment; therefore the miſery of man is great upon him.*] For want of which ſort of prudence men ſuffer very much: becauſe there is a certain ſeaſon for, and a certain manner of, doing every thing; which if it be not underſtood (and it requires no ſmall pains to be able to diſcern it) or not embraced, it is not only impoſſible to be done, but many and great inconveniencies inſue upon that overſight, or neglect. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *For he knoweth not that which ſhall be: for who can tell him when it ſhall be?*] For no man can be ſure that the like opportunity will return again: future things being ſo much in the dark, that neither he nor any one elſe can inform him what ſhall be

be hereafter; or when that will come, which in the course of things may probably be expected. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. There is *no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither* hath he *power in the day of death: and* there is *no discharge in* that *war, neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.*] But let no Prince, though never so great, presume hereupon to abuse his power to Tyranny, because he hath no Superiour to controul him: but remember these things following. *First*, that though he command over mens bodies, yet he hath no dominion over their minds and spirits; nor can he hinder them from thinking what they please, no more than he can the Wind, from blowing where it listeth: and *next*, that he cannot command them long; for death will come, and irresistibly seize on him, as well as on the meanest man: nay, he cannot rule the Chances of War, nor promise himself certain Victory in the day of Battel: or if he have had a great while good success, yet neither his policy, nor his power, shall be able always to defend him from the vengeance that will be taken, of the injustice, cruelty, and impiety, which he exercises in his Government. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 9. *All this have I seen, and applyed my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.*] There is no reason therefore to be so much as ambitious of great Power; for in the view I have taken of all manner of things in this World, which I have weighed also and considered daily, I have observed that sometime unlimited power breaks itself in pieces and the Dominion to which a man is promoted, ends in his own ruine, as well as theirs whom he pillages and tyrannically governs. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.*] And among other things, I also observed such wicked men carried to their Graves, who had been honoured as gods while they lived, because they were GOD's Ministers, and sate in the Judgment Seat, in that very place where he himself is present; but were no sooner gone, but they were forgotten, in that very City where they had enjoyed such high Authority: so vain is the Pomp wherein Great Men live, and wherein they are buried; which vanishes together with them, and, if they were not good in their place, is no more remembred. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Because sentence* against *an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*] But these Observations move not vain men, who look no farther than their present prosperity. For though GOD hath pronounced a dreadful doom against all wicked men, and especially those that abuse their Power unto tyranny over others; yet because execution is not presently done upon them, but they live in all earthly splendor, both they, and others also, by their example, grow more audaciously presumptuous in their wickedness; and think of nothing but doing mischief, by rapine, and all manner of iniquity in the World. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. ¶ *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his* days *be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:*] Not considering or believing this, which I am assured, as an undoubted truth, that though such a powerful Sinner commit innumerable spoils upon his poor Subjects, and no harm befal him a long time, yet, as GOD, will make those good men an amends whose reverence to his Majesty makes them chuse rather to suffer than to sin; and, notwithstanding all their oppressions, maintain their integrity, and continue in awful obedience unto him, and unto their Governours. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 13. *But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong* his *days*, which are *as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.*] So he will take a time to punish that impious Tyrant because he despises GOD and his Providence, and fears not his divine Vengeance: Nor are we without Examples of such men, who have hastened their own ruine; and by their violence shortened their Reign; and vanished away suddenly, like a shadow.

Ver. 14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be just* men *unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there be wicked* men *to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also* is *vanity.*] Such Examples, indeed, do not deter them from wickedness, because they see Instances on the other side (which is an afflicting consideration) that vertuous men sometimes fall into such miseries, as the wicked rather deserve to suffer; and, on the contrary, those impious men enjoy all the prosperity, which one would think, belongs only to the righteous: This, I have acknowledged already, is the lamentable condition of things, and a great part of the trouble of this World; to which I have given the best satisfaction I could, III. 17. V. 8. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 15. *Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour, the days of of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.*]

ſun.] And muſt again commend that advice wherewith I concluded one of theſe Diſcourſes (III. 22.) that this ought neither to diſcourage a man in vertuous proceedings, nor make him careful and ſollicitous about events; but only move him, in the fear of GOD (of which I juſt now ſpake, v. 11.) to be merry whilſt he may: For there is nothing better, than ſoberly and freely to enjoy the preſent good things, which the bounty of GOD beſtows upon us; with thankfulneſs to Him, and charity to others: For when a man, by his pains and labour, hath gotten a great Eſtate, this is all that he can call his; GOD having only lent him what he hath, for his preſent uſe, while he tarries here in this life; and then he muſt reſign it unto others, and give an account, how he hath uſed it, unto Him. *See* Annot. [o].

Ver. 16. ¶ *When I applied mine heart to know wiſdom, and to ſee the buſineſs that is done upon the earth: (for alſo* there is that *neither day nor night ſeeth ſleep with his eyes.)* In this therefore reſt ſatisfied, and do not trouble thyſelf with curious inquiries, Why things are adminiſtred with ſuch inequality, as is before mentioned: for I have travelled, as much as any Body, in that diſquiſition, and, with great application of mind, have made a moſt diligent ſearch into the cauſes and reaſons, of the whole management of affairs here in this world (my mind being one of thoſe, that is as eager and greedy of Knowledge, as others are of riches; for which they toil all day, and take little reſt in the night.) *See* Annot. [o].

Ver. 17. *Then I beheld all the works of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the ſun: becauſe though a man labour to ſeek* it *out, yet he ſhall not find* it; *yea farther, though a wiſe* man *think to know* it, *yet he ſhall not be able to find* it.] But this was all the ſatisfaction at which I could arrive, That the Providence of GOD, without all doubt, governs every thing in this World; but why he ſuffers the wicked to proſper, and the vertuous to be oppreſſed by them; why he doth ſometime ſpeedily cut off a wicked Tyrant, and ſometime defer the execution ſo long, that he lives to do a World of miſchief, and yet goes perhaps to his Grave in peace (*v.* 10.) it is impoſſible to give a full account: For there is little or nothing that any man can know of the ſecrets of his counſels, or indeed of any other of his Works; which are inſcrutable by us, though a man take never ſo much pains to find them out; nay, though the wiſeſt man in the World make it his conſtant buſineſs, he will be ſtill forced to confeſs his ignorance; and the height of his knowledge will be to know, that GOD's ways are paſt finding out.

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1.] To the advices he had given in the foregoing Chapter, he now adds ſome new ones; the firſt of which is this; that *the Wiſdom which will make us happy in this world muſt not make us moroſe and ſupercilious, ſevere and rigorous; but kind and benign, gentle and eaſy.*] And the more we know, the more humble we ought to be: and by the very cheerfulneſs and pleaſantneſs of our countenance, invite others to us; and not by our frowning, forbid them, or make them afraid to approach us.

This I take to be the meaning of the *firſt* Verſe; in my *Paraphraſe* upon which, I have had reſpect to ſeveral acceptations of the ſeveral Words, which it will be too long here to give an account of. They that will conſult Interpreters will find how they vary; and therefore I ſhall only mention the Expoſition of *Melanchon* upon the latter part of the Verſe (which is not commonly known) which following the LXX, he thus tranſlates: *Wiſdom is the light of a man's countenance; but a pertinacious* (or impudent obſtinate) *perſon is worthy of hatred.* Which he explains in this manner, that Wiſdom which can judge aright, when ſeverity is profitable, or when lenity will do beſt, when it is fit to make War, when to be quiet; brings a man great gladneſs; but a pertinacious perſon, who is ſtiff and obſtinate in his Opinion; and will not hearken to thoſe that give him good counſel, but follows the motions of his own anger and obeys his paſſions, deſtroys himſelf and others. As the pertinacious humour, for inſtance, of *Pericles* and *Demoſthenes* was moſt pernicious unto all *Greece.*

[*b*] *V.* 2.] This pertinacious humour ſhews itſelf oft-times, in oppoſing the Sovereign Authority: whereby men create to themſelves and others, great trouble in this World. And therefore *Solomon* adviſes men in the next place (deſiring them not to diſlike the counſel, becauſe the King gives it) to live in dutiful ſubjection to their Prince; as a ſingular means of leading a happy life. For it is hard to ſay, whether the Prudence and Juſtice of a Sovereign, in ruling well; or the humble and peaceable ſpirit of the people in complying with the eſtabliſhed Orders; contribute moſt to the publick Welfare. Certain it is, that it is much ſafer and eaſier (as well as more honeſt) to ſubmit and be quiet, than to contend

and

and unſettle the peace of Kingdoms; though Princes do not govern as they ought.

Melanchon makes this Verſe to contain two Precepts (as the LXX. alſo ſeems to do) in this manner: *Obſerve the Commandment of the King; and the word of the Oath of God.* A Sentence, ſaith he, exceeding worthy of conſideration and remembrance: in which he commands us to obſerve the Command of the King; but with this reſtriction, that we obſerve the Law of GOD, and do nothing contrary unto that. For he calls the Law the *Oath of God*; becauſe GOD made the Sanction of it, in promiſes and threatnings with an Oath. But this Interpretation wholly neglects one word in the *Hebrew*, viz. *al*: and it draws both *dibrath* and *ſhebuath Elohim* from their ordinary and uſual ſenſe, to a meaning that is forced and ſtrained. For which reaſon another Expoſition is not natural; which makes this indeed one Precept, but inſtead of taking the latter part of it for an *obligation* to obſerve it, turns it into a *reſtriction* of it; in this manner: *Keep the King's Commandment, but according to the Oath of God*; that is, as far as Religion and the Faith we owe to the great Lord of all will ſuffer.

This is true, but not the true ſenſe of the *Hebrew* word for *Oath*; which ſome would have relate to the Covenant made with God in Circumciſion; which is ſtill farther off from the buſineſs than the Notion which *Melanchon* had of it. Our Tranſlation is the plaineſt and moſt literal; be obedient to the King, *and that in regard* (or becauſe of the matter) *of the Oath*, to which God is a Witneſs, and a ſevere Revenger of the breach of it. From which a moderate Interpreter doth not much vary: whoſe words it will not be unprofitable to ſet down in this place, which run thus in *Engliſh*. *Regard the King's mouth*, i. e. "Do whatſoever comes "out of his mouth; whatſoever he com- "mandeth and appointeth, out of that "Authority which he hath by Divine "Ordinance: *and chiefly the intention of the "Oath of God*, (ſo he tranſlates the latter "part of the Verſe) that is, the Oath "whereby every one citeth God as his "Witneſs and Judge, that with a good "Conſcience he will obey the King; "becauſe God hath ſo commanded." Thus *Joh. Coch.* Which *Oath* is either *tacit*, the very being in the condition of a Subject, carrying with it (as the late Primate of *Armagh* ſpeaks) by implication, a *ſilent* Oath of Fidelity and due Obedience) or *expreſs*, in the direct Form of an Oath, which Princes have, for their better ſecurity, been wont to exact of their Subjects. Their is an ancient Form, ſtill remaining in *Vegetius*, of the Oath wherin the Soldiery bound themſelves to the Chriſtian Emperors: *By God, and by Chriſt, and by the Holy Ghoſt, and by the Majeſty of the Emperor; which, next after God, was to be loved, and honoured*, L. 2. C. 5. Where he adds this remarkable reaſon for it; becauſe to him, when he hath received the Name of *Auguſtus*, faithful Devotion is to be performed, and all vigilant ſervice paid, *as unto a preſent and corporeal God*. The violation of which Oath, tho' made to an Heathen Prince, how heinouſly God takes; even as a deſpiſing of an Oath made to himſelf, and a breach of his own Covenant, thoſe terrible threats do ſufficiently demonſtrate (*Ezek. XVII.* 12, 13, 14, *&c.*) which are denounced againſt *Zedekiah*, who rebelled againſt the King of *Babylon*, *who had made him ſwear by God*, 2 Chron. XXXVI. 13.

Some of the *Phariſees* were the firſt that we read of, who would not take this Oath of Allegiance: but (as *Joſephus* tells us, *L. XVII. Antiq. Cap.* 3.) boaſting themſelves to be the moſt exact Obſervers of the Law of God, and therefore the moſt in his favour (while they were full of inward pride, arrogance and fraud) dared openly to oppoſe Kings, and preſumed by their motions to raiſe war againſt them, and annoy them: refuſing, ſaith he, to take the Oath, when all the *Jews* had ſworn to be faithful to *Cæſar*. Of this Sect, he adds, there were above ſix thouſand: who were ſo far from leſſening their crime by this refuſal, and making what they did againſt his Authority to be no Rebellion: that it heightened it very much, and was in itſelf a piece of Rebellion: they having a natural Allegiance unto him, by being born his Subjects,

There are ſome who from the beginning of this Verſe, argue this Book not to be *Solomon's*: becauſe he ſaith of himſelf, *I obſerve the mouth* (i. e. Commandment) *of the King*. So they tranſlate the firſt words: which the LXX tranſlate as we do; and ſo do the *Chaldee*, the *Syriack*, and *Arabick* Interpreters. For though the *Hebrew* word be אני *Ego I*; it ſignifies nothing to this purpoſe; becauſe he doth not ſay *I obſerve*, but ſimply *I*; *do thou* obſerve. There being a diſtinct Note בין *I* and what follows: ſhowing that it is a ſhort Form of Speech, to be ſupplied by ſome ſuch word as this, *I ſay*, or *I command*, or *counſel*; or rather *charge* thee. And the reaſon perhaps why the principal Verb was omitted, might be as the learned Primate of *Ireland*, *Uſher*, conjectures) becauſe no word could be found ſignificative enough to expreſs the deepneſs of the Charge.

Some may think that I have dilated to much upon this Verſe: but they may be pleaſed to conſider how uſeful, if not neceſſary it is, at this time, when men begin again to plead the lawfulneſs of reſiſtance. Which is ſo plainly condemned in this place, that the moſt learned Aſſertors of the *Old Cauſe*, were extremely puzzled to make it agree with their Principles in the late times of Rebellion. There is one who (in his Book called *Nature's Dowry*, Chap. 21.) calls in the aſſiſtance of a great many *Hebrew* Doctors to help him to another Tranſlation of the words; and yet, after all, is forced to acknowledge that our *Engliſh* is right enough: and is content to admit it, with this Proviſo, that *the King manage well the Affairs of the Commonwealth.* As much as to ſay, do what they would have him.

[c] *V.* 3.] The firſt word in this Verſe is capable of ſeveral ſenſes, which I have endeavoured to expreſs in the *Paraphraſe.* For it originally ſignifies ſuch a paſſion and perturbation (particularly that of *anger* and *terror*) as makes a man *precipitant* in his motions: being tranſported ſometimes by ταχύτης, and ſometimes by ὀκνία in the LXX: and the meaning of the Wiſe man is, that in purſuance of the foregoing counſel, (*v.* 2.) we muſt take care, if we deſire to live happily, to ſuppreſs our paſſions, and not to ſhew the leaſt diſcontent with the Government: eſpecially not haſtily and raſhly to fling ourſelves (as we ſpeak) in a fume, out of the King's Preſence, on any occaſion: much leſs receive his Commands with impatience; or, which is worſt of all, incur his juſt diſpleaſure by ſullen diſobedience. For though we may think to eſcape the effects of it, we ſhall find ourſelves deceived: Princes having long arms (as the Phraſe is) to reach thoſe that offend them; though they flee never ſo far from them. This is the ſenſe of *v.* 3.

[d] *V.* 4.] And it is farther enlarged in this Verſe: where *Symmachus* tranſlates the firſt words thus; Διὰ τὸν λόγον βασιλέως ἐξουσιαστικόν ἐστι, *for the Command of the King is authoritative*; carries ſuch authority with it, that it will be executed. For the word *Shilton* (from whence learned men have not unfitly derived the Titles of *Sultan* and *Soldan*) denotes ſuch a *power* as overpowers, and cannot be reſiſted: like that of Death, (*v.* 8.) to which all muſt ſubmit.

And ſo it follows, in the end of this Verſe, *Who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* i. e. *firſt*, Who hath any authority to call him to an account? as much as to ſay, none hath, but God alone. According to that of an eminent *Rabbi* (quoted by the forenamed Primate in the entrance of his Book about *Obedience*,) *No Creature may judge the King, but the Holy and Bleſſed God alone*, To allow the people (either collective, or repreſentative) to have power to do it, is to make them *Accuſers*, *Judges* and *Executioners* alſo, in their own cauſe; and that againſt their Sovereign. Nor *ſecondly*, Can any man ſafely attempt it; but he ſhall meet with puniſhment either here or hereafter. Which is no new Doctrine, but the ſame with that of St. *Paul* (as *Luther* here honeſtly notes) *they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves Damnation*: which none ſhall be able to avoid. *Therefore it is ſafe ſimply to obey Magiſtrates.* Which he repeats again upon *v.* 7. *A man cannot do better than ſimply to obey.* So Preachers, ſaith he, ſhould exhort the tumultuous and ſeditious. *For judgment, vengeance, or puniſhment, is ordained and decreed by God, to all the diſobedient, which none ſhall eſcape.* And thus much the Author of *Nature's Dowry* is forced to acknowledge from the evident light he ſaw in this place; *that the ſcope of the words is, that as we tender our own ſafety, we ought not to withſtand the Magiſtrate in his Edicts, which are conſonant to the Word of God.* And it is *Wiſdom*, ſaith he (out of *Eliſha Gallico* an *Hebrew* Interpreter) *in a private man, when the Magiſtrate enjoins what is repugnant to God's Will, to remove out of his Dominions, rather than conteſt with him.* Which ſome come conceive to be imported by the word *telec* (*go out, or go away*) in the foregoing Verſe.

[e] *V.* 5.] From whence he again concludes it is the moſt prudent courſe, as well as moſt honeſt, to comply with thoſe that have authority over us, in a dutiful obedience, or humble ſubmiſſion. So I have expounded the word *Commandment*, for the Commandment of the King before mentioned. Which if we do not oppoſe, it is the way to preſerve us from *knowing ſorrow*; as we ſpeak, very agreeably to the *Hebrew* Phraſe in this place; if by *evil thing* we underſtand the evil of Puniſhment, rather than of ſin. Many indeed by *Commandment* underſtand the Precepts of God; which if we keep we ſhall not fall into any evil Practices; particularly, not into Rebellion. Which is a good ſenſe, and the Reader may follow which he pleaſes: for the latter part of the Verſe will agree with either. Wherein he ſuggeſts that the wiſeſt thing we can do, when Princes require any thing grievous unto us; is not to rebel; but, to watch the fitteſt opportunities to petition for redreſs: and that after ſuch a manner as may not give offence: So I have expounded *time* and *judgment*, in this and in the next Verſe.

[f] *V.* 6. For the truth is, a great part of the happineſs of our life, depends upon our

our diſcertion in obſerving and chuſing, the fitteſt opportunity for every thing, and the right manner of doing it. Eſpecially when we have to do with Kings, andGreat Perſons: concerning whom the Wiſe man may ſtill be thought to ſpeak; both in this and the following Verſe.

[g] *V.* 7.] If the *Hebrew* reading would bear it, the *Vulgar* Tranſlation (which the *Syriack* follows) of this Verſe, hath given an excellent reaſon, why a man is at ſuch a loſs to diſcern what is fit for him to do upon all occaſions (eſpecially how to direct his behaviour toward Kings) *Becauſe he knows little of what is paſt; and leſs, or rather nothing, of what is future.* For Prudence conſiſts in the remembrance of things *paſt*, conſideration of things *preſent*, and forſight of things likely to *come hereafter*.

Luther refers it wholly to the miſerable condition of a Rebel, in this manner, " He " deſires various things, and hopes for " mighty matters by his diſobedience, " but is lamentably deceived. For of the " very impunity which he promiſed himſelf, he cannot be ſecure; but in an " hour when he thinks not of it, Judgment overtakes him, and he periſhes " in his diſobedience. In ſhort, the " Wicked contemns preſent obedience, " and minds not future puniſhment. The " Wiſe man acts quite otherways; and " remembring what miſchiefs attend upon the rebellious, is ſtudious therefore " to be obedient."

[h] *V.* 8.] Hence he takes occaſion to give ſome good Advice to Princes themſelves (which ſeems to me the plaineſt ſenſe of this Verſe) not to abuſe their Power, becauſe none can withſtand them, or ſo much as queſtion them: but to remember how weak they are upon many accounts; and therefore ought to be moderate in their Government, if they intend to live happy. For otherwiſe they muſt expect their peoples hatred; which they cannot hinder, no more than they can Death, which is not in their power to reſiſt. And if they be engaged in War, they will find their Subjects aſſiſt them ſo coldly, that it may endanger the loſs of their Crown. So that Clauſe may be underſtood, which we tranſlate, *there is* no *diſcharge in War* (the word *that* being not in the Original) that is, it will be too late then to diſcharge their Subjects from the heavy burdens, whereby they have oppreſſed them; when they have need of their ſervice againſt an Enemy. Or, as I have expreſſed it in the *Paraphraſe*, they cannot command what ſucceſs they pleaſe in War; but the event will be dubious: taking the word *Miſlachat* for a *Dart*, a *Javelin*, or ſuch like *Weapon*; which we cannot direct and guide in that confuſion, ſo as certainly to hit the Mark at which it is thrown. So the *Targum* tranſlates it, *Nor do the Inſtruments of Arms profit.* Or we may take it for a *Commiſſion* to raiſe Forces (it being but once more uſed in the Bible, *Pſal.* LXXVIII. 49. and there the *Miſlachat* of evil Angels, ſeems to be a Company of Angels, ſent with a Commiſſion to do the Execution there mentioned) which is too late to iſſue in the day of Battel, if he be beaten: or, if he be not, yet let, him not flatter himſelf (which is the ſenſe of the laſt Clauſe of the Verſe) as if he ſhould alway eſcape; for the Divine Juſtice will one day lay hold on him, and puniſh him.

Thus, with reference to Princes, the LXX. ſeem to underſtand this Verſe: who having ſaid *v.* 4. βασιλευς κρατιζων, *the King commands with authority*, thus tranſlate the firſt words of this, ουκ εστιν ανθρωπω κρατιζων εν πνευματι, but *no man* (no not the King himſelf) *hath authority in all things; for example, not over the ſpirit of man.* But this Verſe alſo may be expounded (as ſome Interpreters underſtand it) to be a continuance of the foregoing Diſcourſe; in this manner; that no man can bridle the wrath of the Prince (by *ſpirit* underſtanding *anger*) or hinder the irruption of it. And it is in vain alſo for men to ſeek to ſave themſelves from the Sentence of Death which he hath pronounced againſt them: for if they ſhould wage War with him, it is not likely they would overcome or eſcape in the day of Battel; or, if they did, they would meet ſometime or other with a juſt puniſhment for their Rebellion. Which is the meaning of the laſt Clauſe (if the words be thus taken) *Wickedneſs*, that is, *Rebellion) ſhall not deliver thoſe that are the Authors of it.*

[i] *V.* 9.] This, and the following Verſe, agree very well with that Expoſition which refers *v.* 8. to Princes: who ſometimes are advanced to rule over others, to their *own hurt.* So we tranſlate the laſt words of this Verſe; which *Luther* who is not alone in that Opinion) will have ſtill to belong to *Subjects*, over whom a Prince is ſometimes placed to be a Scourge unto them. Notwithſtanding which, ſaith he, the King's Commandment is to be obſerved, and Sedition not to be moved. Which he repeats again (ſo full he was of this Doctrine) The Wiſe man here grants that there may be evil Governours, to puniſh their Subjects; and yet theſe alſo are to be tolerated.

[k] *V.* 10.] This Verſe I have taken wholly to belong to *wicked Rulers*; becauſe all the ancient Tranſlations do ſo, as well as our *Engliſh*. Though moſt of the modern Interpreters will have the firſt part of the Verſe to refer unto wicked Governours,

nours, and the latter part unto good; whoſe memory is aboliſhed, when the other (ſo bad is mankind) are extolled and honoured: For which I ſee no reaſon, but look upon it as contrary to the deſign of the Wiſe man, in this place; and therefore I have rejected it.

The place of the Holy] may be expounded divers ways; but it ſeems to me moſt natural, to take it for a *Periphraſe* of the Place of Judgment (mentioned III. 16.) in which the Judges ſuſtained the Perſon of GOD: who was in their Aſſembly, and judged in the midſt of them *Pſal.* LXXXI. 1. Whence the Judgment-Seat was called the *place of the Holy*, i. e. of GOD the *Holy one* of *Iſrael:* whom the *Jews* now conſtantly call by the Name of *the Holy, that moſt Bleſſed one.* St. *Hierom* underſtands it of the *Temple* (but then it muſt be tranſlated, not the *place of the holy* but the *holy place*, which is not agreeable to the *Hebrew*) and expounds the words thus, *The wicked buried, who were eſteemed Saints in the Earth; and while they were thought worthy Princes in the Church, and in the Temple of God.* I have ſometimes thought that the words might, according to this ſenſe of the *holy place*, be thus word for word rendered out of the *Hebrew* (if the Grammarians will permit *Holy* here not to be a ſubſtantive) *I ſaw the wicked buried, and they* (that is, ſuch as attend their Funeral) *came, and even out of the holy place followed.* That is the very Prieſts waited on the Herſe, to do them the greater honour. Or thus, *The Funeral Pomp reached from the very Temple, to the Place of Burial.*

[*l*]. *V.* 11.] From hence he takes occaſion to ſhew what is the very root of mens malicious and incurable wickedneſs. And the firſt thing to which he aſcribes it is, their thriving a long time in evil courſes; which makes them hope this proſperity will continue to the end of their days. And if they can but live ſplendidly; they care not what becomes of them when they die. Now though there be a *pithgam* a *Decree*, a *definative Sentence* (as the word ſignifies) paſſed againſt them; yet nothing being done upon it, ſo ſoon as we expect; it both hardens the heart of thoſe Sinners, and mightily diſcourages better men: who hereupon grow angry, or flag in their Duty: to both which *Luther* would have what follows referred.

But it properly belongs to the evil doers, who upon the ſuſpence of the Judgment paſſed upon them, ſin on with great confidence; and have nothing elſe in their thoughts but malicious contrivances. Both which may be denoted by this Phraſe, *their heart is filled in them* to do evil.

[*m*] *V.* 12, 13.] Yet this is not to be underſtood, he here ſhews, without exception; but ſometimes the divine Juſtice proceeds to quick execution. Which is a thing noted by Heathens themſelves, that GOD cuts Tyrants ſhort; and ſuffers them not to ravage ſo long, as they hope to do. And thence they exhort them to moderation; according to that of *Steſichorus* quoted by *Ariſtotle* in his *Rhetoricks* (as *Melanchthon* here obſerves) *De not injure any man for the very Graſhoppers will chirp it in the Fields.* That is, the poor who are oppreſſed, ſend out their Complaints, and move GOD to puniſh ſuch Tyrants.

[*n*] *V.* 14.] Here he diſcovers the other root of mens incurable wickedneſs, *viz.* the examples they ſee of thoſe who live vertuouſly, and yet live miſerably. Which proves a great ſcandal to thoſe who admire worldly things too much: and makes them angry, at leaſt to behold how all was given heretofore, for inſtance, to wicked Prieſts, and now godly ones have ſcarce bread to put into their mouths. They are the words of *Luther*, who obſerves that Soldiers have bter Pay, than many of Chriſt's Miniſters; who are to lead his People, and conduct them unto Heaven.

[*o*] *V.* 15] Notwithſtanding which, the Wiſe man adviſes him that would live as happily as the ſtate of things here will permit, not to grow ſullen at this (*v.* 15.) much leſs to doubt of GOD's good Providence; nor to be diſturbed, though we are not able to give a reaſon, why vertuous men ſuffer very much, when the wicked at the ſame time eſcape. Which I take to be the meaning of the *two laſt Verſes*; which I have referred to our ignorance of this particular matter; as St. *Hierom* alſo doth, whoſe words are theſe: *He that ſeeks the cauſes, and reaſons of things, why this or that is done, and why the World is governed by various events; why one man is blind and lame, and another is born with eyes and ſound; one is poor, and another is rich; this man is noble, that inglorious; he gets nothing by his enquiry, but only this, to be tormented in his own Queſtions, and to have his Diſputations inſtead of a Rack; and yet not find what he ſought.*

That word in the *Hebrew* which we tranſlate *becauſe though*, is found only in this place; but from *Joſhua* I. 7. (where it is found in compoſition) the *Doctors* conclude it ſignifies, *for that*, or *becauſe of*; and ſo the meaning here is, that a man ſhall not be able by all the labour and pains he can take; no though he be a Wiſe man that is thus laborious, to diſcover the reaſons of things and give an account of the difference which he obſerves, in the Divine Diſpenſations.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins where the foregoing ends; the Wiseman proceeding still to justify what he had observed, about the most puzzling Question in the World: Why the good and bad fare all alike, without any constant visible distinction? *His Resolution, Cautions, Remedies, about this Matter, will appear so plainly in the* Paraphrase *and* Annotations, *which I shall annex to it, that I will give no large account here of this Chapter; but only note that the summ of it is this: That the confusion of Things here below, should not move us to discontent; much less incline us to Irreligion: but rather dispose us, with Thankfulness and Sobriety, to enjoy freely that portion of good Things, while we have them, which God hath given us. Neither slackning our diligence, nor trusting to it alone; but depending on God's wise Providence, which, notwithstanding that seeming Confusion, governs all Events: disappointing many times the most likely and applauded means; and again, succeeding the most unlikely and contemptible. Which should move us to commend Ourselves and Concerns unto God; and then, above all things, to value and study true Wisdom and Prudence, in the management of all Affairs: as far excelling mere Power, of which we are foolishly ambitious.*

Ver. 1. FOR *all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous and the wise, and their works* are *in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred,* by *all* that *is before them.*] This is no rash Assertion, for I *Solomon* affirm again (VIII. 16.) I have deeply considered all that belongs to this matter, with earnest desire and endeavour to give a clearer account, and fuller resolution of it, than this, which is all I can say: that tho' good Men and prudent are under the care of God (which must satisfy them in all events) by whose special Providence, both they and their Undertakings and Affairs, are approved, directed, governed and defended; yet (such a Secret there is in it) they prove sometimes so unsuccessful, that no man can know by any thing that befals them, or others, how God stands affected towards them; but will conclude very falsly, if he judge that God loves him who hath all that his heart desires; or that he hates him, who is sorely afflicted. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *All* things come *alike to all,* there is *one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean: to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as* is *the good, so* is *the sinner: and he that sweareth, as* he *that feareth an oath.*] For there is no certain and constant distinction made between one man and another, in the distribution of things in this World; but they all fare alike, especially in publick calamities: a righteous man, for instance, perishes in a Battel as well as the wicked; he that keeps himself pure and undefiled dies in a Pestilence, as well as the filthy and unclean; he that worshippeth God in sincerity and truth suffers by Storms, Shipwrecks and Inundations, &c. as well as a prophane Person or an Hypocrite; and on the contrary a blasphemer of God, nay, a perjured Wretch, prospers and thrives, as much as he that dreads the holy Name of God, and dare not rashly, much less falsly, take it into his mouth. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *There* is *an evil among all* things *that are done under the sun, that* there is *one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness* is *in their heart while they live, and after that,* they go *to the dead.*] This (it must be acknowledged) is one of the most grievous things in this lower World, that all things being thus blended together without any distinction, some draw from thence this lewd and wild Conclusion, That there is no difference between Vertue and Wickedness; and therefore take the greatest license to do evil confidently and boldly all their life long: pursuing their own lusts and passions so furiously, that they hasten their end; and Death, which spares no Body (but is the most common of all other things) seizes on them, before they think of it. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. ¶ *For to him that is joined to all the living, there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion.*] But who would chuse to be a Companion of these mad Men, who run themselves so fast out of all hope? which still remains (in the midst of all our changes here) as long as a man remains in the number of the living; but is lost when he is dead: in which respect the meanest and most contemptible person here in this World, hath the advantage of the greatest King, when he is gone out of it. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 5. *For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.*] For while men live and are well, they have sense and relish of such things as they possess; and, knowing they must die, are taught thereby to use them with a sober freedom: because when they are gone from hence they become perfect strangers to all things here, and can no longer enjoy any benefit of their labours (IV. 9.) the fruit of which falls into the hands of other men, who never so much as think what is become of them.

Ver. 6. *Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any* thing *that is done under the sun.*] Nor doth it then signify any thing, whether a man was loved, or hated, or envied by them; but all these Passions are so extinguished with them, that no body courts their favour, nor fears their ill will or displeasure: for, tho' they have been never so powerful, they have nothing more to do with us here in this World; nor can we, if we would, transmit any of our Enjoyments to them, in the place where they are.

Ver. 7. ¶ *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.*] And therefore shaking off both all anxious Cares, and also all perplexing Thoughts about God's Providence (*v.* 1.) excite thy self by the remembrance of Death, to a cheerful enjoyment of those good things present, which thou justly possessest: use them while thou hast them, with a well-pleased, contented,

nay, joyful Mind; believing, if thou haſt approved thy ſelf to God in the reſt of thy Works, it is very acceptable to Him, that thou ſhouldſt thus rejoice in his love; who hath made all things here for the ſervice of man, and bleſſed thee with a comfortable portion of them. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 8. *Let thy garments be always white; and and let thy head lack no ointment.*] For which reaſon, do not live either ſordidly or ſadly; but, at all ſeaſonable times, entertain thy ſelf and thy Friends liberally, with ſuch Pleaſures as may recreate and refreſh thy ſpirits, after thy honeſt labours: for innocent mirth, ſuitable to thy condition, is as becoming thoſe that are good, as the filthy delights of men lewdly voluptuous are abominable. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 9. *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou loveſt, all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the ſun, all the days of thy vanity: for that* is *thy portion in* this *life, and in thy labour which thou takeſt under the ſun.*] Flee therefore Adultery and Fornication, but ſolace thy ſelf exceedingly with thy own Wife; and, loving her with the moſt tender and conſtant affection, take all the comfort her Society can afford: for it is the greateſt God hath provided for Mankind, in this troubleſome life; and therefore both ſeek for ſuch an one as thou canſt love; and, when thou haſt her, delight thy ſelf in her Company, with ſuch unalterable kindneſs, as may help to ſweeten the afflictions to which we are ſubject in this World: for thou canſt reap no other fruit of all thy toil in this life, but to take an innocent pleaſure, with tranquility of mind, in ſuch good things as theſe, which the Providence of God beſtows upon thee. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for* there is *no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.*] In which, that thou mayſt take the ſincereſt pleaſure, let it not make thee ſloathful, much leſs diſſolute; but diſpoſe thee rather to be vigorouſly induſtrious, in doing all the good that is in thy power: for which end, lay hold on every occaſion that preſents itſelf, and improve it with the utmoſt diligence; becauſe now is the time of action, both in the employments of the Body and of the Mind; now is the ſeaſon of ſtudying either Arts or Sciences, or Wiſdom and Vertue; for which thou wilt have no opportunities in the place whither thou art going in the other World: which is deſigned for reſt from our preſent labours, and for the reward of them. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 11.] ¶ *I returned and ſaw under the ſun, that the race* is *not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor yet riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.*] But do not preſume merely on thy own induſtry, though never ſo great, for good ſucceſs in thy undertakings, nor fanſie that nothing ſhall interrupt thy pleaſures, but look up unto God, and leave all to his Providence: For (to return to what I ſaid about events, v. 1.) I have obſerved that they do not depend upon our Will and Pleaſure, but upon His: We being apt to think, that he who, for inſtance, can run ſwifteſt, will certainly carry away the Prize; and that he who hath the greateſt Forces will win the Victory in a Battel; when it falls out quite otherwiſe, that both of them loſe the day: And more than that, the Wiſe and the Learned in their Profeſſion, cannot ſometimes get their bread, but men of greateſt reach are poor, and ingenious Artiſts not at all regarded, or encouraged, according to their deſerts; for there are certain ſeaſons, wherein by various accidents which unexpectedly ſtart up, all mens nimbleneſs, ſtrength, valour, wit, cunning and dexterity, prove ineffectual. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 12.] *For man alſo knoweth not his time, as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds* that are *caught in the ſnare; ſo* are *the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it falleth ſuddenly upon them.*] For no man can foreſee many evils that befal him, no not the time of his death; which ſurprizes him unawares, when he thinks no more of it; than the ſilly Fiſh, or Birds do, of the Net or the Snare, wherein they are caught to their deſtruction: Nay, as they are intangled, when they ſwim or fly ſecurely, in hope to catch their prey; ſo do men periſh by thoſe counſels and actions, from whence they expected the greateſt Advantages; and are undone, by ſome ſudden and unavoidable miſchief that ſeizes them, when they thought themſelves at the top of their hopes. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 13. ¶ *This wiſdom have I ſeen alſo under the ſun, and it* ſeemed *great unto me:*] But tho' events be not in our power, being over-ruled by a higher Providence, we ought not therefore to imagine, there is no uſe of prudent counſel and forecaſt: For that ſort of Wiſdom, which we call Political, how mean ſoever it may ſeem in ſome mens eyes, is with me of greater price than Wealth and Riches. And this ſingle Obſervation ſhows that I have reaſon for it. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 14. There was *a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king againſt it, and beſieged it, and built great bulwarks againſt it:*] There was a City of ſmall Circuit, ill fortified, and mann'd by a very ſmall Garriſon; againſt which a mighty King with numerous Forces, made his approaches: And, having intrenched his Army, and drawn a ſtrong Line about it, and raiſed his Batteries, doubted not to take it ſpeedily, or to have it ſurrendered into his hands.

Ver. 15. *Now there was found in it a poor wiſe man, and he by his wiſdom delivered the city; yet no man remembred that ſame poor man.*] When by a ſtrange Providence of God, there unexpectedly appeared a wiſe man, but he ſo poor that no body minded him, who ſaved the City from this imminent danger; and that not by Money, for he had none; nor by Arms, for the Beſiegers were far ſuperior in ſtrength; but merely by his wiſe counſels, contrivances, ſtratagems and conduct, wherein he excelled the greateſt Warriours: And yet, O foul ingratitude! his Citizens, who ought to have recorded his Fame, and preſerved it to all Poſterity, ſoon forgot their Deliverer; and, becauſe he was poor, regarded him after this memorable ſervice he had done them, no more than they had done before. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver.

Ver. 16. *Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless, the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*] Which notwithstanding ought not to discourage worthy men from serving their Country; for Wisdom and Counsel, from such Examples as this, will be preferred by all judicious and vertuous persons, as well as by me, before mere power and strength: Because ungoverned Forces destroy themselves, when a little Force, under skilful conduct, atchieveth the greatest things: and therefore it ought to be highly valued, in the most obscure person, tho' the senseless Multitude (as if Wisdom borrowed all its credit from him that possesseth it) despise the counsel of a poor man; and oft-times suffer this punishment of their folly and ingratitude, that, shutting their ears to his wholsome advice, they fall into many and great calamities. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 17. *The words of wise* men are *heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.*] An intolerable fault this is. For the modest speeches of the meanest wise man, delivered gently, and without noise, are far more worthy to be heard, and, if they meet with a patient Ear, and a serene Mind, free from the tumult of pride and passion, will be more regarded, and prove more efficacious, than the most clamorous and imperious language of a powerful Fool: as appears by what the poor man propounded for the saving of the City, which prevailed more in their distress, than the furious outcries of the greatest Commander, swaggering among his Troops of ignorant Soldiers. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver 18. *Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.*] I cannot therefore but again commend Counsel, and wise Conduct, and prefer it before the greatest Forces, and all manner of warlike Preparation; for it sometimes saves whole Armies, nay Countries, from destruction, which have been utterly ruined by the rash boldness and forwardness, or other Error, of some mighty man; who hath overthrown well-settled Kingdoms and States, and brought them into many Miseries: for it is a known thing, that many have been undone by the fault of one; as by one man's prudence many have been delivered. *See* Annot. [*o*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Verse* 1. Tho' *Solomon* had often, and thoroughly considered that Question, mentioned in the Argument of this Chapter, yet he could come to no resolution about it, but this: That it ought not to shake our belief of God's love to vertuous men (which is expressed in that Phrase, *in the hand of God*; wherein are included all the effects of his kindness and care) and that we must not judge men to be good or bad, by what befals them in their outward estates. So those words are most naturally interpreted, *A man knoweth not love or hatred*, &c. which some indeed refer unto men, not unto God, in this sense: *No man knows certainly what is best for him in this World*; and consequently cannot tell what he should desire, and what deprecate, of all the things that are before him. For those things which he hates and is averse unto, may be as good for him as those which he loves, and wishes to enjoy. To this purpose *Maldonate*. Or thus, No man knows whether that which he loves, or that which he hates shall befal him; but *all things are before them*; that is, are appointed how they shall be, antecedent to the will of men. Thus *Eben Ezra*. And there are those who interpret that Phrase, *before them*, in this manner: *They see the good and evil which befals them, but cannot foresee it till it come upon them.* And some join both together thus, *Neither the favour nor disfavour of men, neither their approving or opposing what we do, is any certain mark that we are good or bad.*

But I have followed that sense which seemed to me most simple and most coherent with the rest of the words. As for that Doctrine which many great Writers in the *Roman* Church have built upon this Text, that *no man can be certain whether he be in the favour of God or no, while he is in this life*; *Melanchthon* truly calls it, *Interpretatio Monachorum*; the Interpretation of the Monks; who distorted the words of *Solomon*, and wreathed them to their own dotages. For it is madness, saith he in another place, (in his Treatise of Good Works) to say, that we know not whether Murderers and Adulterers are worthy of God's hatred.

[*b*] V. 2.] For this next Verse plainly shews, that he speaks of such notes of God's favour or hatred, as men are very desirous he would make; by putting a difference between good and bad men, in external things. Which he is not pleased to do: but they are sick, or lose their Goods, their Children or Friends, all alike. Which is more particularly true in publick Calamities, as St. *Cyprian* excellently discourses, both in his Book to *Demetrian*, and in his Book *de Mortalitate*. In the former of which he acknowledges, that good and bad men being in this World, as in one and the same house; whatsoever befals the house must necessarily befal the Inhabitants; who cannot be well, when the common Air wherein they all breathe is infected; nor have a good Crop, when there wants Rain to make the Earth fruitful. "Only herein (saith he to the Pagans) we "are not *compares & æquales vobis*, alike and "undistinguish'd from you: that we do not "grieve as you do, in these common Calamities; we are not so impatient; nor make "such outcries and complaints: but a courageous and religious patience quiets our mind, "and makes us thankful to God. *Viget apud "nos spei robur*, &c. the strength of Faith is "vigorous among us; and the firmness of "Hope: and a mind erect in the midst of the "ruines of a decaying World: together with "an immoveable Vertue; a constantly joyful "Patience; and a Soul always secure of her "God. So that she may say with the Prophet (III. *Habbak.* 17, 18.) *Although the figtree should not blossom, neither should fruit be in the vine*, &c. *yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*" The difference of the several expressions used here in this Verse, for good men and bad, I have explained, as well as I could, in the Paraphrase.

And they that would ſee Examples of the ſame event to every one of the oppoſite Perſons, may look into the *Hebrew* Commentators, or into *Mercer*, and there find them.

[c] *Verſe* 3. In this and the following Verſes, he ſhews the ill uſe men make of the foregoing Obſervation; and their folly therein. For, imagining God loves all men alike, becauſe they find the ſame things happen to them all, they run into ſuch an exceſs of wickedneſs, with ſuch a frantick liberty, as brings them ſpeedily to their Graves: whereby they loſe what they would have kept, and what they deſired and hoped ſtill to get. Thus I have interpreted *v.* 4. in which there is exceeding great difficulty; both becauſe of the various reading of one word, which we tranſlate *joined to*; and the uncertainty whether *Solomon* here delivers his own Opinion, or the Opinion of the *Epicures*; whom ſome think he here introduces, and making a Speech which reaches to *v.* 11. which is the ſenſe of *Greg. Thaumaturgus* among the *Greeks*; and of ſeveral *Latin* Writers, who herein follow ſome of the *Hebrews*: whoſe wiſe men ſay (as we read in *Maimonides* his *More Nevochim*, Part II cap. 28.) *that ſome ſought to ſmother the Book of* Eccleſiaſtes, *becauſe its Words ſavour of Hereſy.* From which Imputation that they might free it, they took ſuch words as they thought look'd that way, to be the Sayings of carnal men. But there is no need to have recourſe to this way of Expoſition (as St. *Hierom* acknowledges) which I have not followed, becauſe there ſeems to me to be an eaſy and plain ſenſe of the words, in coherence with the foregoing. And in expreſſing of that ſenſe I have neglected neither the *Writing*, nor the *Reading* as the *Hebrews* ſpeak: but taken notice of the ſenſe of the word we tranſlate *joined to*, as it is in the *Text*, and as it is in the *Margin* of the *Hebrew* Bibles. There are many other ways of explaining it, and the whole Verſe; but I ſhall not trouble the Reader with any of them, ſave only with *Melanthon's* (which I do not find taken notice of by any of the latter Interpreters) who tranſlates the words thus: *What therefore is to be choſen? in one that is alive there is hope; and a living Dog,* &c. In anſwer, ſaith he, to thoſe who being diſturbed at the confuſion of things, ask'd, *Muſt we then chuſe to labour, when we meet with no rewards? Solomon* replies, By all means follow your Calling, and commend events to God: "there is hope while a man lives that "he may come to ſomething; and altho' thou "canſt not be a Lion, yet be content to be a "meaner Creature, tho' it be but a little Dog. "Thou art not able to be ſuch a Captain as "*Scipio*; yet thou may'ſt be like to *Fabius*. "Why do we ſeek for *Lions*, ſuch heroical "Captains and Governors, as *Gideon*, *Samſon* "and *David*? Let us uſe ſuch as we have, "who tho' they be not like thoſe Lions, yet "may be like ſmall Dogs. And let them do "ſomething in their places; and pray to God "they may be Veſſels of mercy. In which conſi- "deration, *ſaith he*, *Solomon* ſtays long; ſaying "in the following Verſes, that the dead are gone "from the government of this World; and "therefore we muſt uſe thoſe that are preſent, "follow our Calling, reſt in God by Faith "and a good Conſcience, what ſoever the events "be" As for thoſe that fancy the Wiſe-man would here contradict himſelf in what he ſaid Chap. IV. 2, 3. unleſs we take theſe words for the Opinion of other men, they may be eaſily anſwered; that both are true in different reſpects. There he ſpeaks with reſpect to the *troubles* of life; and here with reſpect to the *advantages* of it; the chief of which is, hope of bettering our condition, when it is never ſo miſerable. Which may be extended to the Mind, as well as our outward Concerns: there is hope men may live to ſee their Follies, correct their Miſtakes, amend their Lives, and recover the favour of God: which is irrecoverably loſt when they are gone from hence. In ſhort, he ſeems to ſay the ſame that the Heathen meant in the Fable of *Pandora's* Box: in which *Hope* alone remain'd, after every thing elſe that was good was flown away. And there are the like Sayings in *Theocritus* and *Euripides*: which may be found in *Eraſmus's Adages*, Chil. 2. Cent. 4. Adag. 72.

[d] There is little difficulty in the following Verſes; where there are ſeveral Paſſages which ſhew, that *Solomon* is not repreſenting the ſenſe of thoſe who believe nothing after this life: but hath reſpect only to the ſtate of men here in this World, as he ſaith expreſly in the concluſion of *v.* 6. And in the ſeventh Verſe plainly ſuppoſes the man to whom he directs his Diſcourſe to be religiouſly affected, and to govern himſelf in his Pleaſures with a regard to God, and the cenſure that He will paſs upon his Actions in another place: and thereupon adviſes him to a cheerful uſe of all manner of good things in this life.

[e] For I take *white garments* not to denote a magnificent and ſplendid way of living; but only a neat, clean and pleaſant (both *white garments* and *anointing the head* being oppoſite to the habit of Mourners, which was ſad and ſordid) in which there can be no danger, if it do not hinder ſerious buſineſs; but rather be a refreſhment after it, and a preparation to renew it, as it follows, *v.* 10. The *Eſſenes* (as *Joſephus* tells L. II. *de Bell.* Cap. 7.) went in white; tho' they would not uſe any Ointments, which ſeemed to them too voluptuous. The pleaſure indeed of them was great (as I ſhall ſhew upon I. *Cant.* 2.) and was by many abuſed, and made too expenſive and coſtly: but not therefore to be refrained altogether by ſober People; who forbare them in times of *mourning* (2 *Sam.* XIV. 2.) and *faſting* (VI. *Matth.* 17.) but uſed them in Feaſts and in times of Joy, XLV. *Pſal.* 7. XCII. 10. VII. *Luke* 37, *&c.*

[f] V. 9.] Here is a new Proof, that this is not the Speech of Voluptuaries; for they love not to be confined to a Wife; as *Solomon* here adviſes his happy man to be: making her his Partner in all the joys and comforts he hath; as ſhe will be in his Grief and Sorrows. The Hebrew Phraſe *ſee life*, or *lifes*, in the plural Number, is well tranſlated by at *live joyfully* (or *very joyfully*) for *chajim* includes in it all the conveniences and pleaſures of Life.

XXXIV. *Pſal.* 13. and to *ſee* is to *enjoy*, as was noted before.

[g] V. 10. Here *Gregory Thaumaturgus* imagines the Speech of the Prophane, Atheiſtical Crew concludes; and gloſſes in this manner upon it: Ταῦτα μὲν οἱ μάταιοι, ἐγὼ δὲ, &c. *Thus vain men talk, but I ſay unto you*, &c. (as it follows in the reſt of the Chapter.) Which is not at all agreeable, in my Opinion, to the words of this Verſe: Wherein there is a very ſerious advice to be diligent in all that we have to do in this World: Which is not the way of ſenſual Men, who love not to think of *work*, *contrivance*, (or *thought*) *knowledge* and *wiſdom*. The difference between which words, I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe; and ſhall only add, that they ſeem to comprehend our whole buſineſs here in this World. For action is employed in ſome *work* or other; to which we muſt bend our *thought*, and deviſe how to do it; and for that end learn *Sciences*, but eſpecially ſtudy *Wiſdom* (unto which *Sciences* are an entrance) that we may both accompliſh what we deſign, and know how to uſe the fruit of our labour.

[h] V. 11. But after all that we can do, he adviſes to a faithful dependance upon God and his good Providence: and not upon our own ſtrength or Wiſdom. By which Advice he reproves that old Saying, *Faber quiſque Fortunæ ſuæ*; *Every Man makes his own Fortune*: "Which (as the Lord *Bacon* ſpeaks in a Diſcourſe, *touching helps to the intellectual Powers*:) "we ought to look upon as an inſolent and "unlucky Saying: except it be uttered as an "hortative or ſpur to correct ſloth; and (I may add) to excite us to watchfulneſs, in laying hold of all opportunities, and neglecting no occaſions of doing our ſelves good. "For "otherwiſe, if it be believed as it ſounds, "and a Man enters into an high imagination "that he can compaſs and fathom all acci-"dents, and aſcribes all ſucceſſes to his own "drift and reaches, and the contrary to his "errors and ſleepings, it is a prophane "Speech, and it is commonly ſeen that the "Evening Fortune of that Man is not ſo pro-"ſperous, as of him that, without ſlacking "his induſtry, attributeth much to Felicity "and Providence above him.

Yet this is not the ſame Doctrine with that neither, which ſaith, *Vitam Fortuna regit, non Sapientia*; Fortune, not Wiſdom, governs the life of Man. For, as *Melanthon* obſerves upon the concluſion of this Book, there is much difference betweeen *Philoſophical*, and *Eccleſiaſtical* Sayings. The *Church*, in ſuch Sayings as this, confirms Providence, and admoniſhes us to have God in our thoughts; whether events be anſwerable to our deſires, or not. But prophane Writers, in ſuch Sayings as that now mentioned, leave out Divine Providence, and take no notice of it; but only of a blind Power, which troubles all things that are wiſely deſigned.

It is no impertinent inference which *Corranus* makes from theſe words, That all the things which the *ſwift*, the *valiant*, and the reſt of the Perſons here mentioned ſeek, being their end, of which they frequently miſs; it is an Argument that the happineſs of Man conſiſts not either in *Fame*, or *Victory*, or *eating* and *drinking*, or *riches*, or the *favour* of others; but in contentment with ſuch things as we have, and God ſhall think good for us, in his wiſe Providence.

[i] V. 12.] Which hath given us many Examples of men, who, incited by falſe Perſuaſions, and fooliſh Hopes, dreamt of good Events; when in the midſt of their courſe, they were oppreſſed with great Calamities. Thus *Melanthon* gloſſes upon theſe words in *ver.* 12. and inſtances in *Marius*, *Pompeius*, and *Julius Cæſar*. Which he explains more largely in his *Review* of the firſt Chapter of this Book, a little before he died. "Where he obſerves how *Cato* and "*Marcellus* were diſappointed when they hop'd "for Victory in a good Cauſe: and *Brutus* and "*Caſſius*, when they hoped by the treacherous "ſlaughter of *Cæſar*, to have reſtored the Form "of the old Republick: and *Antony* when he "thought by oppreſſing *Auguſtus*, to make "himſelf Monarch of the World. All which "verifies the old Saying (which he remembers "in his Notes upon the *Proverbs*) Μάταιοι μά-"ταια λογίζονται, ὅτι ἐπιθυμίαι. Vain men are abu-"ſed by their own deſires, which lead them "to make falſe accounts, and fills them with vain "expectations. And it teaches us the truth "of thoſe divine Sayings, *The way of man is "not in himſelf. Except the Lord build the "houſe, they labour in vain that build it*, &c. "Examples of which we have in *Saul*, who "hoped to have left the Kingdom to his Po-"ſterity: and in *David* himſelf, who thought "once of having *Abſalom* for his Succeſſor. "But *Solomon* here teaches us to conſider, how "infinitely the wiſe Providence of God excels "our greateſt wit and cunning, and can more "eaſily over-reach all our counſels, and over-"turn our well-laid deſigns, than we can "out-wit the ſilly Birds and Fiſhes.

[k] V. 13, 14.] Which ſhould not diſcourage wiſe and regular Proceedings; but only make us refer our ſelves unto God: Who, as He thus diſappoints the moſt probable hopes, ſo, at other times makes men ſucceſsful, when they have no hope at all. As *Solomon* here ſhows in the following Obſervation, *v.* 13, 14. Upon which St. *Hierom* gloſſes in this manner: "It hath been often ſeen, that a ſmall City "and few Inhabitants, being beſet by an "Army of innumerable Enemies, and beſieg-"ed ſo ſtraitly, that they were in danger, if "not otherways, to periſh by Famine; were, "on a ſudden, contrary to all Mens expecta-"tion, delivered by a mean Perſon, who ha-"ving more wiſdom than all the wealthy, "great, powerful and proud Citizens, thought "of a way to ſave them, when they gave "themſelves for loſt; and affected that alſo, "of which they utterly deſpaired. And yet, "O the ungrateful forgetfulneſs of Man-"kind! after the Siege was raiſed, after the "liberty of their Country was reſtored, there "was no body thought of this poor man, no "body gave him thanks for their ſafety: but "all honoured the rich, who in their danger "could do them no ſervice."

[l] V. 15.] Which sets forth, as the Lord *Bacon* observes on this Verse, (*L. 8. de Aug. Scient. C. 2. Parab. 21.*) "the depraved and malignant "nature of Mankind: Who in extremities "and straits, commonly flee to men of wis-"dom and courage; whom before they de-"spised: but so soon as the Storm is over, "they become unthankful Wretches to their "Preservers. *Machiavel*, not without reason, "propounds the Question, Whether should "be most grateful to well-deserving Persons, "the Prince or the People? but in the mean "time he taxeth them both of Ingratitude. "Tho' this doth not arise merely from the "Ingratitude of the Prince, or the People a-"lone; but there is added too oft to this the "envy of the Nobility: who in secret repine "at the Event, tho' happy and prosperous, "because it proceeded not from themselves. "For which cause they extenuate the merit "of the Act, and depress the Author."

Thus *Themistocles* was served (as *Luther* here observes) who having perform'd great things for his Citizens, was basely requited by them. Nay, *David* himself was soon forgotten, who had been the greatest Benefactor to *Israel*: ten of whose Tribes soon renounced all dependance on his House, and fell off quite from their subjection to it. So that to do good to the World, saith he, is to throw away the benefits we bestow; or to cast Gold into Dung, and Pearls before Swine. And therefore it is best to enjoy what we have, and to mind our present business; casting away care for the future. For as *Phædria* saith in *Terence*, *It is better my benefits should be lost, than I should be lost together with them.* And not to be moved from our Duty by the World's Ingratitude, is an Advice he often repeats, very profitable in this Chapter: that we may be like our heavenly Father, who *doth good to the evil and to the unthankful.*

[m] V. 16.] The beginning of this Verse may be illustrated out of *Dion Prusæus* (Orat. 2. *de Regn.*) who observes that *Agamemnon* wish'd rather for ten such grave Counsellors as *Nestor* than so many valiant Youths as *Ajax* and *Achilles*, ὃς δέκα τῶν ἀλκίμων ἐ Τρῶας. Where he shews also how great the power of Oratory is to subdue mens Minds.

[n] V. 17.] Yet it must be added, that the best and safest Counsels, cannot be so much as heard or regarded, tho' never so wise, till peoples straits have made them humble, sad and serious; as *Eben Ezra* expounds this seventeenth Verse. *The words of the Wise are despised by the people, when they are in prosperity, but when they are in distress* (almost famished by such a Siege as is beforementioned) *and silenced by fear and grief; then they listen greedily and diligently.* Which *Melanction* expresses better; *The words of the Wise are heard by the silent*: i. e. by such as do not rage with any desire; but seek the truth, and what is wholsome for them. This, and another obvious sense of the Words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase; but have taken little notice of this, which seems not so near the meaning: that *it is better to hearken to wise men, who persuade to peace, than to tumultuous spirits, who incite silly people unto War. He that rules among Fools*, is an Hebraism for a great Fool: or we may understand it of one whose authority sways much among Fools, or of a *foolish Commander*. And St. *Hierom* expounds it of a *bawling Orator* or *Preacher*: "Whatsoever "Declaimer, saith he, thou seest in the Church, "by the inticement and elegance of words ex-"citing Applauses, moving Laughter, or stir-"ring up the People to affections of Joy; "know that it is a sign of Folly both in him "that speaks, and in them that hear him: "for the words of the wise are heard in quiet "and moderate silence, *&c.*

[o] V. 18. All Authors furnish us with abundance of Examples of the truth of the last Clause of the last Verse: but I shall only briefly mention a little of *Melanction's* Gloss upon the place. There are Vessels of wrath, and Vessels of mercy: The *Vessels of wrath* are unhappy men, who bring destruction upon themselves and others, tho' sometimes they be great and wise Persons: According to that of *Solon*, *Commonwealths are overturned by great and excellent Wits.* Such were *Ahaz*, *Zedekiah*, *Catiline*, *Anthony*, and others. And in the Church, *Samosatenus*, *Arius*, *Manichæus*, and many other pernicious Doctors. Of all which *Solomon* says, *One Sinner destroys much good*, Πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ ὑμᾶτον πόλις καλὴ ἀνδρὸς ἁμαρτοῦ. The *Vessels of mercy* are such men, whose course is salutary to themselves and others; such a poor man in the City was *Jeremiah*; by whose counsels, if they had been followed, *Jerusalem*, might have been saved from destruction. Let us therefore pray to God, with continual groans, that we may be Vessels of mercy; and that He would preserve us from being the Pests and Furies (ἀλάστορες) of mankind: driving a violent course to our own and others ruin.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The summ of this Chapter is, That, as true Wisdom and Vertue is the only thing that can give us tranquillity: so that part of it which teaches us to govern our tongue, and to behave our selves dutifully towards our Governours (though they do not manage things to our content, nor to the general good) conduces more unto it, than men are willing to believe. For this is, in a manner, the scope of the whole Chapter, to make every one sensible of the great Blessing of Government; especially of good Government: and that therefore they ought to bear with all manner of grievances; as a less mischief than the want of Government, by Rebellion against it. Which begins, in undutiful Discourse: the folly and danger of which he admirably represents; with many other things tending to our present peace and settlement.

Ver. 1. *Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.*] And the wiser or better any man is, so much the more cautious ought

ought he to be, in all his words and actions; if he mean to preserve that credit, esteem and authority in the World, which give him great advantages of doing good. For as dead Flies, tho' very small Creatures, falling into a Pot of Ointment, and bursting there, corrupts that precious Composition, which the Apothecary hath made with excellent Art; so that, it turns the Perfume into a stink: in like manner doth a small errour, or miscarriage blemish him, who was highly valued for his Discretion and Vertue; and the least sordid action destroys his Reputation, who was honoured for his noble way of living. *See* Annot. [a]

Ver. 2. *A wise mans heart is at his right hand; but a fools heart is at his left.*] It is hard indeed to be thus circumspect; but herein a truly Wise man's worth is discovered, that his judgment never fails him in the greatest difficulties: wherein he not only resolves aright, and takes things by the right handle; but is ready also in the execution of what he designs, and manages his Affairs with ease, and with dexterity: whereas a Fool both mistakes in his aim, and fumbles also in the easiest business; which he handles so awkardly, and untowardly, that it commonly miscarries. *See* Annot. [b].

Ver. 3. *Yea also when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth* him, *and he saith to every one* that *he is a fool.*] And tho' he would dissemble his folly, and endeavour to seem wise, he is so far from his aim; that in every thing he doth, whether great or small, he openly betrays his want of judgment: nay, by his very gate and behaviour, as well as by his words and actions, he tells every Body (as plainly as if he said it in so many words) that he is a Fool: Which appears in nothing more than in his holding all for Fools, in comparison with himself. *See* Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.*] But a man's Wisdom hath seldom a greater tryal, than when his Prince is angry with him, and perhaps treats him hardly; which incenses a Fool, and makes him leave the Court, if not grow factious and rebellious: But it is better and safer Advice to keep in the station, wherein thou art, and to do thy Duty faithfully; with a patient, but yet pensive spirit: For nothing so appeases a Prince's offended mind, as to give way to his fury by mild and gentle words, and by modest, humble and submissive behaviour; whereby a man also prevents a World of sins, into which he throws himself, if he yield unto disloyal thoughts. *See* Annot. [d].

Ver. 5. *There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an errour which proceedeth from the ruler.*] And there are worse evils than this, that a wise and good man must patiently bear withal; particularly that great errour, which Princes, it must be acknowledged, either through ignorance, imprudence, surprize, easiness and being imposed upon by other mens false representations, subtilties, or ill affections, are too frequently guilty of: whereby they derive many mischiefs upon all their people; for which they must answer, as if they were committed by themselves. *See* Annot. [e].

Ver. 6. *Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.*] In advancing I mean (which I have too often observed) the most witless, careless men, and of base condition; or suffering such who are noted for nothing but their folly, and their vices, to creep up to the most eminent Dignities and Offices; and in the mean time depressing noble persons, or making no account of them, though indowed no less with all excellent Qualities, than with Riches and Honour. *See* Annot. [f].

Ver. 7. *I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.*] By the like senseless folly, I have observed mere Slaves, that deserved not the meanest Office in a private Family (being fitter to be kept under by every Body, than to be intrusted with the smallest power) appear in the greatest state, by reason of their high preferment; and men of great Families, or of singular worth and merit altogether slighted; nay, forced to wait upon them, as if they had been their Lacqueys. *See* Annot. [g].

Ver. 8. *He that diggeth a pit, shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.*] Which foul indignities, notwithstanding, a wise and vertuous person should chuse rather to wink at, and patiently endure, than think of moving any publick disturbance; for such counsels are extremely hazardous, and commonly end in the ruine of those that give them: according to that known Proverb among us, which admonishes us how dangerous it is, to pursue our own Desires and Passions violently (especially against Kings and Princes) whereby men in a heat, forgetting their own contrivances, have run themselves into that very ruine, as Hunters do into the Pit, which they prepared for others: and that other common Saying, which warns us not to overthrow the well-setled Laws and Customs of Church or State; for that is like the breaking down a Hedge: wherein as a Serpent many times lurks, which gives him that attempts it a deadly bite; so they frequently draw upon themselves their own destruction, who pull down the ancient Government. *See* Annot. [h].

9. Whoso remoueth stones, shall be hurt therewith: and he that cleaveth wood, shall be endangered thereby.] We abound with Proverbs to this purpose; Which teach us that the giving publick disturbance, by invading the Rights of others (especially of Kings) and endeavouring to change the Form of Government, is like removing the Boundaries of Lands; which raises great troubles, or like the taking much pains to pull down a Building without judgment; some of the Stones of which fall upon him that meddles with it, and crush him in pieces. Such is his folly also that fancies he can mend every thing that is amiss, and form and square the people exactly according to his Rule: which proves just like an unskilful Workman's cutting a knotty piece of Wood; who only makes Clefts and Chips (as the other doth Factions and Rents) and in the issue gives a grievous gash to himself. *See* Annot. [i].

Ver. 10. *If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.*] This is sufficient to show, how unprofitable all our

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endeavours are without true judgment. For as a rusty Tool, though managed by the strongest man, is so far from effecting his desires, that it only tires his arm, unless he file and whet it, to recover its edge: so all the power in the World rather hurts than advantages him, that hath it, unless it be guided and directed by Wisdom and Prudence; which can do far more, than violence and force, to correct the errors of Kings, and mend the faults of their Government. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Surely the Serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babler is no better.*] But of all other men he is the most dangerous, who spits his Venom secretly against his Governours; slandering and traducing all their actions in his private Discourses, and thereby enraging peoples minds against them; and giving them a more grievous wound than if they were stabbed with a Weapon: For that may be prevented, or healed afterwards, but this is like the biting of the most deadly Serpent, which stopping its ear to all enchantments, poysons both inevitably, and incurably. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. *The words of a wise mans mouth* are *gracious: but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.*] See here again the wide difference between a Wise man and a Fool. The former of which by his vertuous Discourse wins every ones (especially his Prince's) favour; and doth good to those with whom he converses: but the other by his ill tongue, not only hurts his Neighbour, but plunges himself into endless troubles; out of which he cannot deliver himself, nor can any Body him. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 13. *The beginning of the words of his mouth* is *foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.*] And the more he talks, in the greater Danger he is: For, though he begin only with senseless and impertinent stuff, he heats himself before he hath done into a rage; and then minds not either how injurious his Discourse is unto others, or how mischievous unto himself.

Ver. 14. *A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?*] No, tho' he be admonished of it he cannot desist. For he abounds with words, and while he thinks to mend the matter, he makes it worse; adventuring to talk not only of things Civil, but of things Sacred; and not only of things present, but of things past also, nay, of things to come: In which wiser men than he have little or no skill; and yet the less he knows, the more confident and bold he is; when he doth not so much as foresee the evil he is bringing upon himself, by his foolish prating. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 15. *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.*] Which is the more intolerable, because he torments himself and others with fruitless pains about the abstrusest matters; when he knows not the most trivial, that are as plain as the Highway: For if he be engaged in any common business, he only tires himself with toil and labour, but is never the nearer: like a silly Traveller, who, being ignorant of the Road, goes about, if not through dangerous, yet through troublesome Paths, and the farther he goes, perhaps is the farther off from the place he intends. *See* Annot. [*o*].

Ver. 16. ¶ *Wo to thee O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning.*] What a miserable condition then, is that poor Country in, which abounds (as most places do) with a great many of these Fools? And besides, hath the unhappiness to fall under the Government of a Child: whose Tutors, Counsellors, Guardians, and Protectors, who have the management of all Affairs in his minority, are so given to their pleasure, that they can find no time to mind seriously the publick business; nor take any care to infuse Principles of Wisdom and Goodness into their young Prince's mind, but let him remain a Child as long as he lives. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Ver. 17. *Blessed* art *thou, O land, when thy king* is *the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.*] And, on the contrary, the happiness of that Nation is inexpressible, whose King is not only of an illustrious Family, descended from the most ancient Nobility; but, having had ingenuous and liberal Education, doth not degenerate from their Heroical Vertue: which teaches him to place such Officers under him, in their several stations, as make pleasure wait upon business; which they first dispatch, and then refresh themselves; not to excess, but to fit themselves to return to their business again. *See* Annot. [*q*].

Ver. 18. ¶ *By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.*] Being sensible, that as, through the negligence and gross carelessness of the Master of a Family, the House falls to decay; and, for want of timely reparation, the Rain gets in and rots the Roof, and then the Supporters, and at last the very Foundation of it: so by that laziness and sloth, which is the effect of luxury and riot, Kingdoms themselves go to wreck; and seasonable remedies not being applied to publick disorders, the whole Government by degrees grows out of frame, and is in the end dissolved. *See* Annot. [*r*].

Ver. 19. ¶ *A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all* things.] For these idle and dissolute persons, among other mischiefs, consume the publick Treasure, by their vast expences in Feasts, and all manner of merriment; which serve indeed for their present pleasure, but waste that which should make it lasting, and is of most universal use to support the Prince's Crown and Dignity: And therefore when the Exchequer is exhausted, these men are tempted to fill it by the most grievous oppressions; nay Law and Justice, and every thing else, is sold; Vertue it self is of no price, but money alone is valued, and bears all the sway: which is another way of bringing all to utter ruine, *See* Annot. [*s*].

Ver. 20. ¶ *Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.*] But notwithstanding all this, as I advised thee before, not to rise up in Rebellion against thy Sovereign (v. 8. &c.) so now let me add, that it is very foolish, as well as wicked, to be provoked by

by this ill management, ſo much as to ſpeak an opprobrious word of him, or of his Government, or Miniſters: Nay, entertain not ſo much as a thought of it, though it may be done never ſo ſecretly, where none but thy Wife, or moſt intimate Friend, are admitted: For it is not ſafe to truſt any Body with ſo dangerous a Secret, which it is moſt likely will not alway be concealed; but, as it is certainly known to God, ſo, will be carried by ſome undiſcerned means or other, with ſuch ſwiftneſs to the Prince's Ears, as if the Bird that ſat in the Window, or paſſed by when the words were ſpoken, had flown away immediately with the report of them. *See* Annot. [t].

ANNOTATIONS.

[a] *Verſe* 1.] He ſeems in the firſt words of this Chapter, to proſecute what he had ſaid in the laſt Clauſe of the foregoing; ſhewing how much good one Fool may ſpoil, by the great miſchiefs that enſue one fooliſh action: whereby a man, otherwiſe famed for Wiſdom, utterly loſes his reputation. So moſt Interpreters underſtand the latter part of the Verſe; which *Melanchon*, following the *Vulgar*, interprets quite contrary; that *a little folly*, or rather *folly for a little while, is better than Wiſdom and Glory*: That is, ſeeming folly, like that of *Fabius*, who was condemned for his ſlow proceedings, and thought a cowardly Fool; is better than Wiſdom which makes a glorious ſhow, but doth not conduct things ſo ſafely as that Captain did.

But this Expoſition agrees not at all with the Similitude, whereby *Solomon* illuſtrates what he here ſaith concerning Folly, Which is that of *dead*, or rather *venomous Flies* (for the Hebrew Phraſe *Flies of death* may better be tranſlated *deadly*, than *dead* Flies) which though very little Animals, yet falling into a Pot of precious Ointment, ſpoil it all when they putrifie: and not only take away the delicate ſcent, but turn it into a filthy noiſome ſtink. For a Fly is obſerved to be both *fœdum* and *fœtidum Animalculum*; eſpecially ſome ſort of them, which ſeem here to be particularly denoted by the Word *Zebube*: being not merely bred out of filth, and delighting to live in it, but leaving behind them ſuch a humour as is very offenſive to the ſmell, and kills thoſe Creatures into whom they thruſt their ſnouts. From whence the God of the *Ekronites* had his Name of *Baalzebub*, (2 *Kings* I. 2.) which if it were given him by his Worſhippers, ſignified his power to deſtroy thoſe venomous Flies which infeſted the Inhabitants of that Country: if by the *Iſraelites*, expreſſed their contempt of him, as a mean, and a filthy, ſordid Idol. For therefore St. *Hierom* thinks the Prophet *Iſaiah* compares the *Egyptians* to a *Fly*, VII. 18. not only becauſe they were a weak people, but *propter ſordes Idololatriæ*, by reaſon of the ſordid filthineſs of their Idolatry: which was a great reproach to their famed Wiſdom: and made them vile, even in the opinion of Pagan people.

I cannot here omit the reflection, which the Lord *Bacon* hath made upon theſe words (L. VIII. *de Augment. Scient.* C. 2. Parab. 11.) "that "the caſe of men eminent for Virtue, is "very hard, and miſerable; becauſe their "errors, though never ſo ſmall, are by no "means pardoned. But as in a pure Dia-"mond, of great luſtre, the very leaſt ſpeck "or ſmalleſt cloud ſtrikes the eye, and affects "it with a kind of trouble; which in a "groſſer Stone would ſcarce be obſerved: ſo "in men of ſingular abilities, the leaſt in-"firmities are preſently eſpied, and become "the matter of mens diſcourſe, and are per-"ſtringed with a heavier cenſure; which in "men of meaner parts or rank would either "paſs without notice, or eaſily procure par-"don. *Therefore a little folly in a very wiſe "man, a ſmall ſin in a very honeſt man, and a "ſlight indecency of manners in a man of court-"ly and elegant behaviour, much derogates from "their fame and reputation.* So that it would "not be the worſt courſe for excellent per-"ſons, *if they would mingle ſome abſurdities* "(ſo it may be done without guilt) *with* "*their actions*: that they may maintain a "kind of liberty to themſelves, and confound "the Notes and Characters of ſmaller defects.

[b] *V.* 2.] From hence *Solomon* takes occaſion to repreſent more largely, how much men ſuffer by their folly, and what Advantages Wiſdom gives them: and treats of both, with reſpect, not only to mens private, but to the publick good. And *firſt* he ſhews what a difference there is between a Wiſeman and a Fool, in the management of any buſineſs. So I have interpreted this Verſe, which may be alſo thus paraphraſed, *A Wiſe man always takes honeſt courſes; but a Fool turns into bye ways.* Thus *Greg. Thaumaturgus* gloſſes; *A Wiſe man is his own Leader and Conductor to the beſt things; but a Fool inclines to the wrong ſide, nor will his folly ever lead him to any thing that is excellent.* Which St. *Hierom* expreſſes in this manner; *A Wiſe man always thinks of the World to come, which leads to the right hand; but he that is a Fool, only of the preſent World, which lies on the left.* And quotes a famous paſſage of *Lactantius* (which I find in his *Inſtitutions*, L. VI. Cap. 2.) concerning the Letter Y, unto which the *Pythagoreans* reſembled the courſe of humane life. In which there is a time, when a Youth finds his way cleft, as that Letter is, into two parts or ways; and he ſtands doubting unto which he ſhould incline. If he be ſo wiſe as to take the right hand way, he is happy; if the other, he is miſerable. Which ſenſe *Grotius* follows; *the right hand is the way of Vertue; the left, the way of Vice.* Unto which we may reduce that of the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, *The heart of the wiſe inclines to the Law of God, which was given from God's right hand; the Fool to Silver and Gold, which are the gifts of the left.*

But if this had been the ſenſe, it would have been more proper to have ſaid, the Wiſe man's heart is on *the right hand*; not on *his* right hand; which is much different; and therefore I have omitted this in the Para-

phraſe (though I thought good to mention it here) and taken no notice of many other Gloſſes; particularly that of *Melanchthon*'s, which ſeems ſomething nearer to the ſenſe: *The wiſe man hath power over his affections* (the right hand being the ſtrongeſt, and the inſtrument of action in moſt men) *and can moderate them, as occaſion requires: but a Fool is under the Government of his paſſions; and is hurried that way, which his anger, ambition, grief, and other blind affections drive him.*

I will add this that the meaning may be: *A Wiſe man hath his Wiſdom always at hand*; to direct him what to do, in publick or in private buſineſs; whether he have to do with Friends or Enemies; in adverſity, as well as in a proſperous eſtate (his mind being juſt like the right hand, which we uſe readily, upon all occaſions, for all manner of actions) *but a Fool is to ſeek*; and knows not which way to turn himſelf, *&c.* Which is much to the ſame purpoſe, with what I have ſaid in the Paraphraſe.

[c] *V.* 3.] And agrees with what follows, in this Verſe, the firſt Words of which ſignifie as much as, *Moreover*, a Fool is ſo ſilly, that he cannot hide it. For though the reſt of the Diſeaſes of the mind may be covered by artificial Diſcourſe, as the blemiſhes of our Bodies are with our Garments; only folly cannot be diſſembled, but will appear to all, in every motion of him whoſe weakneſs it is.

There is another ſenſe of the laſt Words of the Verſe, beſide that in our Tranſlation; which I have not neglected: becauſe the Words will bear the ſenſe of the *Vulgar*; viz. *He ſaith every Body is a Fool.* Which St. *Hierom* interprets thus, *He judges all men by himſelf. Symmachus* thus, *He fanſies himſelf the only Wiſe man.* The LXX (as St. *Hierom* obſerves) ſeem wide from the ſenſe, who tranſlate it thus: *All that he thinks is very vain. Maldonate* underſtands it differently from them all, in this manner: *In that wherein he himſelf offends, he reprehends others.*

[d] *V.* 4. And then *Solomon* proceeds to give a particular inſtance of this Folly and Wiſdom; eſpecially in the Publick State and Government. Where it is great folly for a Governour to carry himſelf haughtily, and furiouſly; but if he do, it is no leſs folly in his people to oppoſe him with the like paſſions; and not rather to be patient and peaceable: which is the ſenſe of *v.* 4. Which ſome take for a Counſel to Governors; others to the Subject. They that underſtand it as Counſel to Governors, tranſlate it ſome of theſe ways; *If the ſpirit of a Governor come upon thee*, that is, if thou art fitted for Government, and advanced unto Dignity, behave thy ſelf humbly; and adminiſter all things with great lenity: for that is the beſt way, to heal publick Diſtempers. Or thus, *If thou art made a Prince, diſcharge this Office diligently*, and with vigilance: for if thou art remiſs and careleſs, it will make thee fall into great errors. Or, as ſome will have it, in this manner, *Thou haſt a deſire to be in authority, ſuppreſs it*; or if it be offered thee, accept not of it: a private life is better; and leſs ſubject to the occaſions of ſin and danger. And ſome tranſlate it thus, *If thou art in ſingular favour with the Governour, keep thy ſtation notwithſtanding; and be not ambitious of Preferment*, &c. Which is Counſel unto Subjects; and by *ruach* (*ſpirit*) of the Ruler, moſt do not underſtand his *favour*, but his *anger*: and then alſo it may be taken in a different ſenſe from that in our Tranſlation (making it ſtill an Advice to him that is in Authority) that if anger come upon him, he ſhould reflect, and conſider the ſtation wherein he is; leſt this paſſion make him act undecently, and tranſport him into great ſins.

But the greateſt part of Interpreters, taking the Verſe to be Counſel to a Subject, in caſe he incur the diſpleaſure of his Prince, I have followed that ſenſe; which is almoſt agreeable to the coherence. And I have interpreted that Advice, *not to leave his place*, as moſt do, for not quitting the Duty of a Subject: but have taken in alſo the moſt ingenious Interpretation of the Lord *Bacon*. Who makes this a Political Advice to Courtiers; not to relinquiſh their Place and Office, nor to retire from the execution of their Charge, as many do when they ſee their Prince angry with them. "Which ariſes partly out of an "*impatience of diſgrace*; partly leſt they ſhould "*make the wound bleed afreſh*, by coming into "the preſence; partly that their Prince may "ſee *how ſorrowful, and humble* they are: "which makes them think fit to withdraw "themſelves from their employments; nay, "to reſign perhaps the Offices and Dignities "themſelves into the Princes hands.

"But *Solomon* diſallows this way of Cure, as "hurtful and prejudicial; and that upon very "good grounds. For *firſt* this courſe, doth "*too much publiſh the diſgrace it ſelf*: from "whence both Enemies and Enviers grow "more bold to hurt; and Friends more timo-"rous to help. *Secondly*, By this means it "comes to paſs, that *the wrath of the Prince*, "which, if it had not been made publick, "would have died perhaps of it ſelf, *becomes now "more fix'd*; and having begun to overthrow "the man, is carried on to his utter ruine. "And *laſtly*, this retiring *ſavours ſomething of "a malignant humour*; that is, fallen out with "the times: which heaps the miſchief of in-"dignation, upon the miſchief of ſuſpicion.

"The proper Precepts therefore for a Cure, are "theſe; which he thinks are contained in "the laſt Words, *Pliant demeanour pacifies "great offences. Firſt*, Above all things *not to "ſeem inſenſible or not ſo affected, as in Duty "he ought to be; for the Princes diſpleaſure*; "either through *ſtupidity* or a *ſtubbornneſs*, and "pride of ſpirit. That is, Let his counte-"nance be compoſed, not to a ſullen and "contumacious, but to a grave and modeſt pen-"ſiveneſs; and in all manner of employments, "let him ſhow himſelf leſs pleaſant and cheer-"ful than he was wont to be. Which, it "may be expedient alſo, that ſome Friend "or other ſhould repreſent to the Prince; and "inſinuate ſeaſonably, with what ſenſible "grief he is inwardly afflicted. *Secondly*, "*Let him carefully avoid all, even the leaſt oc-*

"*caſions*,

" *casions*, whereby either the thing it self, " which was the first cause of the indigna- " tion, may be revived: or the Prince appre- " hend a new occasion to be displeased with " him again, or, upon any account whatso- " ever, to chide him before others. *Thirdly*, " Let him with all diligence seek, on the o- " ther side, all manner of occasions, wherein " *his service may be acceptable to his Prince*; " that both he may shew a prompt and for- " ward affection to redeem his forepast of- " fence; and his Prince may understand, " what a good Servant he is likely to lose, " if he thus cast him off. *Fourthly*, Let him " sagaciously either *lay the fault upon others*; " or insinuate, that *it was committed with no* " *ill intention*, in himself; or remonstrate *their* " *malice* who accused him to the King, or " aggravated his fault, more than it deserved. " To conclude, *Let him be diligent and watch-* " *ful in all things, and intent upon the Cure.*

There is another Great Man, of our own, who seems to take this for an Admonition, not to be false-hearted, by flinching from our station, when mighty men frown upon us. *In an upright course* (saith Bishop *Sanderson*, in his Sermon upon 1 *Cor. VII.* 24. Sect. 46.) *Fear not the face of man, neither leave thy place, though the Spirit of a Ruler rise up against thee: patience will conjure down again that Spirit in time, only if thou keep thy self within thy Circle.* But I look upon this, which agrees not with the latter part of the Verse, as an accommodation only of these Words to his present purpose; and not as intended for the proper sense of them.

[e] But of all other follies, this is the most mischievous, of which Princes themselves are sometimes guilty: in preferring (as it follows *v.* 6, 7.) unworthy men (who are so unfit to govern others, that they cannot govern themselves) to the highest Dignities, and perhaps Trusts: and at the same time neglecting, if not depressing men of worth and honour, of Noble Families, and sometime of Heroical Virtue. Which is more provoking, because more pernicious, than the personal displeasure (before mentioned *v.* 4.) which they express towards any ptivate man. For it is an universal grievance, and as if the Ruler himself should give order for all the mischief which they do (as some expound that Phrase *as an error*) and yet notwithstanding, it is the wisest course not to be exasperated by it, to make any tumults and seditions; but to be patient and quiet, *v.* 8, 9. So I have expounded these Verses, in connection one with another: for though there are those who by *Ruler* here understand the *Devil*; who thrusts the worst men into the best Places (as may be seen in St. *Hierom*'s Commentaries) and others understand *God* who permits this; yet the whole Discourse is still to the same purpose: that senseless persons get into power; being more acceptable many times at Court (as *Melanthon* glosses) than the wise and good. According to the ancient Verses,

Ὁ βλὲπ ἀριστερὰ τὸν πονηρὸν ἄνδρα.
Πλησίον δ' ἀεὶ κακός, ὁ ξυνωφελὴς δ' ὀλίγος.

The World takes the greatest pleasure in bad men: the Flatterer fares best in the first place; and next him the Sycophant and false Accuser. In the Roman Story there are many Instances of men preferred merely for their Vices, of others only for money: some of which are collected by *Joannes Fikesacus*, L. 8. Selectorum, Cap. 15.

[f] V. 6.] I mentioned *Vices* (in the foregoing Annotation [e] because *folly* in the holy Language, comprehends that; as well as sillines or incapacity to manage affairs, and mindlesness, negligence and sloth: which are both denoted in the Hebrew Word חסר in this place: Where the Abstract (as they speak) being put for the Concrete; we are to understand idle, ignorant and senseless men; and that in the highest degree; and, being opposed to *rich*, they are also supposed to be men of mean extraction, or condition. For which reason the rich also are to be understood not simply men of Estates, or great Birth; but of excellent education; noble endowments of mind; and attentive unto business, *&c.*

[g] *V.* 7.] The sense of this Verse is not different from that of the former; but the same thing is set forth in both, by two illustrations: one taken from their Place and Dignity; the other from their Equipage (as we now speak) wherein they appear, upon their advancement. For to *ride* belonged unto Great Persons: as to go on foot, unto Inferiors. And to ride on *Horses* in *Solomon*'s time, was much more stately than to ride on *Mules*, which were used by Great Men in *David*'s time (2 *Sam. XIII.* 29. 1 *King. I.* 33.) or on *Asses*, in former Ages, *X. Judg.* 4.

[h] *V.* 8.] Yet it is as senseless, to be inraged, by this preferment of senseless and unworthy men, into rebellion; as the Wise man here shews by several Proverbial Sayings. In the Application of which to this purpose, I have the approbation of *Melanthon*: who expounds the last Words of *v.* 8. and the first of *v.* 9. concerning the punishment of those; who go about to change the ancient Laws, and the Form of Government. And it is more agreeable to the Phrases of *breaking hedges*, and *removing land marks*, or such like things; than to apply it unto the mischiefs that Princes bring upon themselves and their Countries, by such imprudent promotions, as are beforementioned: though that be true also; that such disorders give great disgust, and are the occasion of dangerous commotions.

Which commonly are most fatal, notwithstanding, to those that are so foolish as to advise, contrive, and excite them. Who bring that mischief on themselves which they intended should wholly have fallen upon others; as *Solomon* here shews by two Similitudes. One taken from the Pits digged for the intrapping *Foxes*, *Wolves* and such like Creatures; or, as others will have it, from those that undermine the Walls of Towns, and often perish in the Mines wherein they themselves have long wrought. Agreeable to that old Saying which *Aristotle* mentions (in his *third* Book of *Rhetoricks*, Cap. 9.) out of *Democritus Chius* ὀρύσσων μὴ πέσῃ, ἄλλον μὴ ἐμβάλλων. The other from a Breaker of an *Hedge*, or *Fence* or

Wall

Wall (for ſo we tranſlate this Word, *XXII. Numb.* 24.) or any *partition* (ſo the LXX. there tranſlate it by the Word φραγμὸν) whereby mens Grounds were ſeperated, and kept in ſeveral: in which enterprize he meets with his deaths wound from a Serpent. Which were wont to lurk in Rocks (XXX. Prov. 19.) and in Holes of the Earth (XI. Iſa. 8.) as well as in the bottom of *Hedges*, or old *Walls* (as the Wiſeman here intimates) and in other dry places where there was no Water, VIII. Deut. 15. There were Water-Serpents alſo, IX. Amos 3. of which men were in leſs danger.

[*i*] V. 9.] There is great variety of Judgments concerning the ſenſe of this Verſe: But that which I have given I am ſure is not improper; which, in ſhort, is this: That they who out of love with novelty will not let things alone in their place, but be altering and changing, though thereby they make great rents and diſtractions; do not only give themſelves a great deal of trouble, and diſturb the quiet of their own mind; but run the hazard of ruining themſelves, together with whole Kingdoms and Churches. Therefore that Saying of *Pindar*, quoted by *Melanchthon*, ſhould always be in peoples minds: *It is eaſie to diſturb a Government; but God alone can ſettle it again.*

The Phraſes are ſufficiently explained in the Paraphraſe: only I think fit to note that the Word which, following the *LXX*, we tranſlate *endangered*, is by *Forſterus* tranſlated *aſpergetur*, that is, hurt by the *ſhivers* of it.

[*k*] *V.* 10.] There is no leſs variety, but rather greater, in the interpretation of this Verſe: Wherein he ſeems to return to the commendation of Wiſdom. And it may ſtill refer to what went immediately before; as I have applied it, in the latter end of my Paraphraſe. In which I have not varied from our Tranſlation, if after thoſe Words *put to more ſtrength*, theſe be underſtood; *but all in vain*: And ſo the Words may be tranſlated out of the Hebrew, *If the Iron be blunt, and he* (that cutteth with it) *do not whet the edge, it will overcome all the force he uſes*: that is, will not cut as he would have it. And ſo the meaning of the Verſe is excellently expreſſed by the Lord *Bacon* in his Preface to the *ſecond* Book of the *Advancement of Learning*) *Theſe words*, ſaith he, *inſinuate, that a wiſe election of the means, doth more efficaciouſly conduce unto the accompliſhment of any enterprize; than any inforcement or accumulation of endeavours.* For as the Saying is, *Claudus in via antevertit Curſorem extra viam.* A lame man in the way, will outrun a Poſt out of the way.

But though I take this to be the true ſenſe; yet I ſhall here mention ſome others, that the Reader may chuſe which he thinks moſt congruous. Some take that Word *chajalim*, which we tranſlate *ſtrength*, for *Forces* or *Armies*; and make the ſenſe this; *Where an Army is governed by Wiſdom, it prevails though it be defective in Weapons: For Wiſdom doth more to ſet things right* (i. e. doth more to make up the want of Arms) *than Arms can do to get the Victory alone.* Others who tranſlate the former part of the Verſe to the ſame ſenſe that I have done, tranſlate the laſt part thus: *the excellence of induſtry, is Wiſdom.* That is, Wiſdom in this excels all other Tools; they are blunted by uſe, but it is ſharpened thereby. And therefore they, the more they are uſed, give them that employ the greater labour; but this, the more it is exerciſed, gives us the leſs: Thus *Maldonate*. Some in this manner, If Iron be blunt, it muſt be ſharpned; and ſo muſt the Sword of Juſtice (when by the negligence of Officers, it hath loſt its edge, and the Earth is filled with violence, with theſts and adulteries, &c.) be reſumed and whetted by the Magiſtrate, to the ſevere puniſhment of ſuch wickedneſs.

Melanchthon ſeems to expreſs the ſenſe of the *Vulgar*: as Iron being blunted, is not ſharpned without great labour; ſo the Companion of great diligence, is Wiſdom: or Wiſdom cannot be attained without great induſtry. Which others, that follow that Tranſlation, expreſs thus more largly: As a Knife, or ſuch like Inſtrument, having lain long ruſty, cannot without much whetting be ſharpned again: ſo the mind that is grown dull by long ſloth and negligence, requires great labour, ſtudy and exerciſe, to reſtore it to its former vigour. Which may be applied to Government that is decayed, and cannot, without a wonderful diligence and prudence in thoſe that have the management of things, be covered.

There are thoſe who look upon it only as an Admonition what may be done by mere induſtry and pains-taking, though a man have not much wit, nor be much befriended by others; and yet gets up wonderfully in the World.

[*l*] *V.* 11.] In the Expoſition of this alſo there is much variety; according to the Hebrew Phraſe, *Maſter of the Tongue*, is expounded, either of a *mere Babler*, and looſe Talker; or of a *Backbiter* and Slanderer. I have taken it in the latter ſenſe; as St. *Hierom*, in the Vulgar Edition, doth. And the former part of the Verſe, may either ſignifie a Serpent that *is* not inchanted; or that *cannot* be inchanted, by any means. For ſome ſuch ſort of Serpents there were, as *Bochartus* obſerves (L. 3. *de Sacr. Animal.* C. 6. Part II.) and as appears out of *Jer. VIII.* 17. and other places of holy Scripture. Unto which, I think, the Backbiter and Detractor may be beſt compared: for nothing will reſtrain his virulent humour, nor defend one from the miſchief which he doth in ſecret. I have connected this Verſe alſo with the precedent matter; as it may be, though we ſhould take the Words in the common ſenſe: which is this; that as a Serpent will bite, if he be not charmed; ſo will he do miſchief that talks much, if he govern not his tongue with great Wiſdom. Or, as others interpret the latter part of the Verſe, a man's words though never ſo eloquent (for ſo the Word *lachaſch* is uſed, *III. Iſa.* 3.) will do no good, to pacifie a Prince's mind; if he be not charmed at the very firſt, before he have fixed his anger.

Others take this Verſe ſeperate from the reſt, and underſtand no more by it, than this; that

that a Calumniator is like a Serpent, that bites ſecretly; without ſo much as giving warning by its hiſſing. So *Melanchthon*; who truly obſerves, that calumny is a moſt grievous Peſtilence; which rages and deſtroys whole Countries. For it firſt kindles Diſſentions; and thence ariſe Confuſion of Religion, Wars and Deſolations. Or, according to our Tranſlation. *A Babler can no more refrain from blurting out his own or others Secrets, than a Serpent, if he be not charmed, can do from biting.* Which may be referred alſo to the matter foregoing, in this manner: He that gives himſelf a liberty of talking of every thing, blurts out even the Secrets, and the Vices of Princes; whereby he not only makes himſelf odious, but procures his own deſtruction.

[m] *V.* 12, 13.] The *three* following Verſes, may be alſo referred to the ſame matter; and the latter part of this, is capable of another ſenſe, than that in our Tranſlation; which is this: That *a Fool's lips ſubvert all that a wiſer man hath ſaid.* So St. *Hierom* expounds it. There would be leſs harm in folly, ſaith he, if it would be content with its own ruſtick ignorance: but it affects to contradict the dictates of Wiſdom, and to affront prudent perſons; nay, to ſupplant and overthrow them; whereby it becomes exceeding wicked.

[n] *V.* 14.] And it is in vain to hope to amend this; Becauſe, as *Solomon* here obſerves, a Fool thinks himſelf in this very thing to be wiſe and learned; that he is able to multiply words; though they be never ſo confuſed, without head or foot (as we ſpeak) and he ſay the ſame thing over and over again, in a round; as the LXX ſeem to underſtand the Word *holleloth* madneſs (in the foregoing Verſe) which they tranſlate ἀφροσύνας, as if it were from the Hebrew Word, which ſignifies a *dance*. *Melanchthon* underſtands theſe *three* Verſes, as if they expreſſed the difference between wiſe Counſellors or Teachers, and ſuch as are fooliſh, but fanſie themſelves very wiſe: though they direct their Counſels and Inſtructions, merely by their own, or others blind affections. So *Mardonius* perſwaded *Xerxes*, unto his unhappy War; and *Pompey* had ſuch like Inſtigators: but they were ignorant men, or conſidered not *what had been before.* So he expounds this Fourteenth Verſe: *They who by fooliſh counſel, or pernicious Doctrine, undo themſelves and others, regard not former Examples; nor have any proſpect of future puniſhments.*

[o] *V.* 15.] He refers all to this Verſe (where I have put two ſenſes together) unto the ſame thing. Theſe perverſe Wiſe men, ſaith he, make a great buſtle to no purpoſe; and, endeavouring to reform many things, bring lamentable events upon themſelves and others: becauſe they are ignorant of the ſenſe of Mankind; and conſider not the weight of buſineſs; nor diſcern what is fit to be done. Which is comprehended in theſe Words, *They know not the way to the City, or to the Court:* But are like the Shepherd, ſaith he, who coming to Court, had a Looking Glaſs beſtowed on him; in which contemplating himſelf, he fell into admiration of his own beauty: and thereby grew ſo Inſolent, that he was not only thrown out with diſgrace, but broke his neck.

[p] *V.* 16.] From hence *Solomon* takes occaſion to admoniſh us, that the miſery or welfare of a people, depends very much upon the King that governs them. Who if he be a Child muſt be governed by others: and if they prove bad, as commonly they are, all things go to wreck. This ſeems to be the ſenſe of this Verſe: where by a *Child* I underſtand a Prince to whom the Sceptre falls in his Minority: though it may be taken (as *Jo. Forſterus* expounds) for one that is *rerum imperitus*, unskilful in buſineſs (as in I. *Jer.* 6, 7. III. *Iſai.* 4.) and I have not omitted the common Interpretation, which underſtands it of ſuch a weak *Prince*, as is wholly governed by his paſſions, and lets the worſt of men govern him. Who, like Children, think all is well, if they may but play, and follow their pleaſure. Which they take ſo greedily, that they are drinking, when they ſhould be at Council, dancing when they ſhould be judging Cauſes. So *Jo. Druſius*, I remember, expounds *eating in the morning*, in his Annotations on XVI. *Numb.* 5. where he applies that place of *Jeremiah* XXI. 12. to illuſtrate this: and obſerves that the *morning* is the time of Judgment and Counſel; as the *evening* is for mirth or compotations. According to that of *Socrates*, *In the Morning Counſel, in the Evening Converſation.* And that of the Hebrews, *Non judicant in hora Ebrietatis*; they do not ſit to judge in the hour of drinking; *i. e.* in the Evening. Which is ſo prejudicial to Government, that there was a Law among the *Carthaginians*, that no Magiſtrate whatſoever ſhould drink any Wine at all, τῶτον τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν οἷ ἂν ἄρχωσι, *that Year in which they bear any Office*, &c. as we read in *Plato*, L. 2. *de Legibus*, p. 674. *Edit.* Serrani. And he admirably repreſents what the miſchief of it is, when a mere Youth governs, who is not able to undergo ſo weighty a Charge, in the next Book, pag. 691.

[q] *V.* 17.] And on the other ſide, the felicity of a Nation is unſpeakable, when it is under the care of a gallant Prince: whom he calls *ben chorim.* Which may either ſignifie his Deſcent, or the excellent Qualities of his own perſon: or rather both, one who inherits the Vertue of his Anceſtors. Who though they ſhould chance to leave him but a *Child*, yet intruſt him with ſuch wiſe and faithful perſons, that they infuſe into him the ſpirit of his Heroical Predeceſſors: which makes the people willingly ſubmit unto him. For as *Plato* obſerves, that Parents every where have the power of governing their Children: ſo next to this it is conſonant, γενναίους ἀνδρὸς ἄρχειν, that generous perſons (who do not degenerate from the Vertues of their Noble Anceſtors) ſhould govern thoſe that are mean and baſe, L. 3. *de Legibus*, p. 690. Whence the Babylonian Princes are called by this Name XXXVI. *Iſa.* 12. where the *Chaldee* hath *bene herin*, the ſons of ingenious and free men; or the ſons of heroical Perſons. For

hence comes the name of *Heros*: and thence *Bacchus* is called by the name of *Liber*, i. e. a Prince or Noble Man, as *Bochartus* rightly obſerves in his *Canaan*, L. I. C. 18. And ſo the LXX. tranſlate *ben chorim* in this place, υἱὸς ἐλευθέρων: Which word they elſewhere tranſlate ἔνδοξοι Nobles, V. *Nehem.* 7. VI. 17. and ἔξοχοι, XXXIV. *Iſa.* 12. It is vulgarly derived from the *white garments*, or *robes of fine linen*, wherein ſuch great Perſons appeared: but it is more likely to be of ſome Foreign Original, and may be beſt tranſlated *illuſtrious* perſons.

[r] *V.* 18.] I have referred this and the next Verſe, unto the ſame matter. And this repreſents, how neceſſary it is to be very diligent and careful to make up the ſmalleſt Breaches, and correct the beginning of Diſorders; by ſhowing what ruine attends upon ſupine ſloth, remiſneſs and negligence. Which is expreſſed in *two* moſt ſignificant Words; the firſt (*ſlothfulneſs*) implying ſuch a ſluggiſh temper, that a man will move neither hand to any Work: the other (*idleneſs*) ſuch a remiſneſs and liſtleſſneſs, as there is in a man that is aſleep: when his *hands hang down* (as the Phraſe is XII. *Heb.* 12.) which ſeems to be the import of *ſhiphluth* in this place; coming from a Word that ſignifies humble and dejected.

[s] *V.* 19. The next Verſe repreſents the vaſt power of money: which therefore a Prince ſhould be ſure to have at command; becauſe it commands all other things. As he finds, when he is in want of it; and is thereby tempted to ſqueeze his people unjuſtly; or to ſet all things to ſale: which is another way of expounding that Phraſe, *Money anſwers all things*. I cannot omit here to note, that it would not be abſurd, if this Verſe ſhould be connected with *v.* 17. to ſignifie the happineſs of a Nation, whoſe Prince takes care that his people want not proviſion (*bread* and *wine* in the Language of the Hebrews ſignifying all that is neceſſary for human life) but eſpecially that the money of the Nation, whereby all things are purchaſed, be not exported.

[t] *V.* 20.] But whatſoever negligence, or profuſeneſs and waſte there be; it ſhould not provoke any wiſe and good man, to ſpeak contemptuouſly of his Sovereign, or of his Miniſters: if he conſider merely how unſafe it is, to make ſuch reflections on him. For there are no ears ſo faithful, no place ſo ſecret, as that they may be truſted with ſuch Words: *the ears of Kings*, according to the old Saying, *being as long as their arms*. That is, they can as eaſily diſcover crimes, as puniſh them: they have Spies on purpoſe every where; or men to ingratiate themſelves, will turn Accuſers; or loyal perſons, may, ſome way or other, come by the knowledge of it, and think themſelves bound to let their Sovereign know who are his Enemies.

Thus moſt Interpreters, and the moſt learned underſtand this Verſe: And therefore I have followed no other Interpretation in my Paraphraſe. For thus that admirable perſon, *S. Bochartus* gloſſes upon theſe Words (*Epiſt. qua reſpond. ad* 3. *Quæſt p.* 37.) The true mind of *Solomon* is, that Kings do not want their ἀγγελοσίας καὶ κοπυσίας, Emiſſaries and curious Obſervers; by whom they learn what is moſt ſecret. Which was the reaſon that *Midas* was repreſented by the Poets with Aſſes Ears; becauſe he had thoſe that liſtned and hearkned in all parts of his Kingdom: and brought him News of every thing, that was but whiſpered by his Subjects.

And thus St. *Hierom*, the ſimple ſenſe is, that we take care we be not overcome by anger and fury, to ſpeak evil of our Prince, or detract from him: for he may ſome way or other hear it, contrary to our expectation, and make us ſuffer for our ungoverned tongue. That's the meaning, ſaith he, of the laſt part of the Verſe; which is an Hyperbolical expreſſion, like that, in common ſpeech, when we ſay: *The Walls that are conſcious to what you ſpeak will diſcover it*. Nay, this very Proverbial Hyperbole is uſed in good Authors, for a thing very ſecret, *Unleſs ſome Bird ſaw it*. So *Ariſtophanes*, in his Comedy which hath its Name from Birds.

Οὐδὶς πώποθ' ὑπερεῖδε τὸν ἐμὸν, πλὴν ἴσως ἄνις ἂν ὄρνις.

None ever ſet eye upon my Treaſure, unleſs perhaps ſome Bird.

And *Suidas* cites this Verſe out of the ſame Poet (which more illuſtrates the ſenſe I have given of this Phraſe in the Paraphraſe.)

Οὐδὶς με πωπεῖ πλὴν ὁ παριπτάμενος ὄρνις.

None ſees me, unleſs the Bird that paſſeth by.

But I am not ſatisfied whether *Solomon* had not reſpect to ſomething elſe; and intimated that ſome *Prophet* might make the diſcovery: as *Eliſha* did of many things ſpoken in the King's own Bed Chamber, 2 *Kings* VI. 9. The *Chaldee Paraphraſe*, by *that which hath Wings*, underſtands the heavenly Miniſters: and ſo many of the *Hebrews*: about which, though they talk many fabulous things, yet the meaning may be, the Angels ſhall, one way or other, bring it to light, and give occaſion to the diſcovery. For, as a great man of our own obſerves (Biſh. *Taylor*, L. III. *Duct. Dub.* Ch. 3. Rule 3. n. 3.) *the Government of the other World reaches ſtrangely even unto us*; "and we ſpeak not a word in vain, "but by the Divine Providence it is diſpoſed "to purpoſes that we underſtand not. And "therefore it is not ſafe to ſpeak evil of *Ma*"*giſtrates*, in our private houſes; leſt the An"gel that attends us order it ſo, that it paſs "into publication. But as for the *King* (who "is above the *rich* or mighty) *call him not ac*"*curſed in thy heart*: Which being a thing "that can only be perceived by God, who "is the Searcher of the heart; it ſhews that, "as Angels take care of the rich, the wiſe, "the mighty and noble: ſo Kings are the "peculiar care of God, *&c.*

And indeed, as the ſame *Bochartus* adds, it appears from hence that *Solomon* doth not deter

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us from this sin, by the mere fear of danger; for he lays a restraint not only on our words, but on our thoughts: which are known only unto God. And if we may not in thought detract from him, how much less speak a reproachful word of him; or move rebellion against him.

I shall only add two things more, and conclude this Chapter with a notable Discourse of *Martin Luther*: *first*, that some of the Hebrews who take the Angels to be here meant, thereby understand the *Devil*: as our Saviour by the *Fowls of the Heaven* understands ὁ πονηρὸς, the evil one, XIII. *Matth.* 4. but especially *Night-birds*, they say (who may seem here to be meant, where he speaks of the *Bed-Chamber*) denote the Devil and his Angels. Whence that Proverb among the Arabians, *Speak where there is no Night-Bird*; that is, where no Creature hears.

Secondly, The last words of the Verse, are capable of this sense (if we distinguish between *Bird of the Air*, and *that which hath wings*: taking the one for *Angels*, and the other for *men*; who minister to Kings as Angels do to God) that the Angels will report our blasphemy in Heaven; and some or other will be found to reveal it, and carry the News of it to the King upon the Earth. *Gregory Neocæsarienſis* suggests the former part of this: who thus expounds the Words, *Swift and winged Messengers carry all to the only rich and great King, discharging both a spiritual and rational Ministry.*

It will not be unuseful, much less unseasonable in such an unruly Age as this, to let the Reader understand how deeply the first *Reformers* of Religion laid this Precept to heart; by transcribing some of *Luther*'s Admonitions, in his Annotations on this Verse.

"The worse and the more malignant, saith he, "the World is, the more studious and laborious *Solomon* teaches us to be, in the doing "our Duty. Particularly, in *honouring Magistracy*; because it is a Divine Ordinance, "and the better part of the World: by which "God manages all things under the Sun. But "the ungodly begin their wickedness, chiefly "in the contempt of Magistrates; when they "hear how God blames and reproves them in "the holy Scriptures. But it belongs to the "Divine Office to find fault with Magistrates "and to rebuke them. And therefore, "tho' thou hearest it, yet do not imitate it. "For thou art not God; nor the Ordainer, "no nor the Reformer and Restorer of the "Divine Ordinance. But as God reproves "them, so thee also, in the holy Scriptures; "that thou mayst do thy Duty, and not med-"dle with what belongs to them. Whereas "thou forgetting the Beam in thy own eye, "beginnest to spy the Mote in another man's: "correcting thy Superiors, by whom thou "rather art to be corrected. And if thou "shouldst sustain their Office, wouldst offend "more than they do, and not do so much "good, as is performed by them. The mean-"ing therefore of *Solomon* is this; I have spo-"ken much of Princes, how they undo the "World: but do thou reverence them, not-"withstanding that; for they are not an hu-"man Ordinance, but a divine. St. *Peter* "indeed calls the King an *human Creature*; "because he is assumed from among men; "but his authority is Divine: And though "Princes be bad, they are to be honoured "because of this Ordinance of God. Why "then wilt thou speak evil of those, who "are vexed with so many and such great "cares and labours for thy peace: if they be "good? and if they be bad and foolish, their "own impiety is mischief enough to them; "and brings them into sufficient danger. "Bear with them then, and compassionate "them; rather than rail upon them, and re-"vile them, &c.

Yes, will some answer; but we may say what we please of their Ministers. Not so, saith the Wise man in this place, *Curse not the rich*, i. e. men in great Authority under the King. For (as the same *Luther* discourses upon the *first* Verse of this Chapter) "just as we see "Flies fall into a Pot of excellent Ointment, "and there dying and corrupting, spoil it all: "so when excellent Counsel is given in the "Kingdom, in the Senate, in War; behold "there comes some mischievous Knave or o-"ther, and utterly dashes it: so that it hath "no effect. But as we are compelled to en-"dure those poisonous Flies; so we must be "content to suffer these pestilent Counsellors.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

As Obedience to Governours, and patience under ill Government are the means (he shows in the foregoing Chapters) to preserve peace and quietness; which are the great blessings of humane life: So in peaceable, quiet and easy times nothing contributes more to our happy living, than the constant exercise of Charity, *in Works of Mercy; which make us beloved both of God and man. Upon which therefore the Wiseman here insists largely; in the six first Verses of this Chapter: and then presses men to it by the consideration, that there is no pleasure like this, while they live; and that as they cannot keep what they have long, but Death will rob them of all: so they must give an account of what they have enjoyed: and therefore had best make such an use of it, as will stand them in stead at that time. This I take to be the summ of this Chapter.*

Verse 1. *CAST thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.*] Now, having shown how thou oughtest to behave thy self towards those above thee, look down a little upon those below thee; and believe that nothing is more profitable (though the World think otherways) as well as obliging, than to be kind and charitable unto all men; but especially to the poor, miserable people, though they be not so good, perhaps, as they ought to be; but will ungratefully forget all thy benefits, and never think of them more; or, at least, are never likely to make thee any return; no more than if thou didst sow thy Seed on the Sand or in the Sea: let not that discourage thee; for

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when thou thinkeſt not of it, God will requite thee, either in this World, or in the next; nay, there may come a time, when ſome of thoſe who have been relieved by thee, may do thee ſervice. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight: for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth.*] Give therefore unto others ſome part of the good things, which God hath given thee; and give very liberally, and be not weary neither of well-doing; but though there be a great many Suitors that ſolicite thy Charity, extend thy bounty to them, rather above than beneath thy ability: for thou knoweſt not how calamitous the times may ſhortly be, and then the good thou haſt done, will ſtand thee in greater ſtead than all the Goods thou enjoyeſt: which perhaps may be taken from thee, and leave thee nothing to do good withal; but make thee an Object of other mens Charity; which no perſon hath greater reaſon to expect, than he who, when he had wherewithal, hath been kind to others in that condition. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *If the clouds be full of rain, they empty* themſelves *upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the ſouth, or toward the north; in the place where the tree falleth there it ſhall be.*] Look up to the Heavens, and imitate the Clouds; which are not filled with moiſture for themſelves; but pour it down freely and plentifully upon the thirſty Earth; even upon the barren as well as upon the fertile Soil, without any difference: and look upon the Earth and learn from the Trees to be fruitful in good Works, while thou art alive, for when thou art dead, none can raiſe thee up again to exerciſe that Charity which now thou neglecteſt; no more than a Tree can be made to bear when it is cut down, but which way ſoever it falls, whether to a cold or to a warmer Quarter, there it remains for ever, without ſo much as Leaves. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *He that obſerveth the wind, ſhall not ſow: and he that regardeth the clouds, ſhall not reap.*] And do not put off thy Charity until another time; under a pretence that now the times are hard, or thou ſhalt be better able hereafter, or mayſt find fitter Objects for it, and do more good with it: For as he that will not ſow till the Wind blow from a favourable Quarter, may let the Seeds time paſs over; and he that will not reap, becauſe he is afraid of every Cloud that threatens Rain, may loſe his Harveſt; ſo they that will do no good, till the times be juſt as they would have them, or till they find objects againſt whom there lies no exception, will never want reaſons to excuſe their Duty, and defer it till they have no opportunity for it. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *As thou knoweſt not what* is *the way of the ſpirit,* not *how the bones* do grow *in the womb of her that is with child: even ſo thou knoweſt not the works of God, who maketh all.*] Truſt God for all ſuch things as thoſe, and do not rely upon thy own underſtanding, which comprehends very little of what is before thee; for inſtance, whence the Wind comes: what makes it blow and ceaſe; how the Soul comes into the Body and departs out of it; how the Body it ſelf is formed in the Womb; by what power; and how it goes to work, hardning ſome part of the Matter into Bones, and ſoftning others into Fleſh, &c. And therefore much leſs art thou able to comprehend the Providence of God, who diſpoſeth all things; and know for inſtance, whether it will be a dear Year or a cheap, whether thou and thy Heirs, ſhall live or die; loſe or keep an Eſtate; particularly, what ſtrange ways God hath to blaſt, or to bleſs thy Deſigns; making thy Eſtate dwindle by ſaving, and grow wonderfully by giving away bountifully: Which ſeems to diminiſh; but, by means as ſecret as the growth of a Child in the Womb, encreaſe and enlarge it. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whether they both* ſhall be *alike good.*] Let nothing therefore diſcourage thee, from taking all opportunities, to give thy Alms inceſſantly; early and late; when thou art young, and when thou art old; when things ſmile upon thee, and thou art in a declining condition; for thou knoweſt not which will hit to do the moſt good unto others, and to bring the greateſt Bleſſing back upon thy ſelf: or whether all may prove alike beneficial unto both. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. ¶ *Truly the light* is *ſweet, and a pleaſant* thing it is *for the eyes to behold the ſun.*] Let not love of thy own pleaſure, make thee regardleſs what becomes of other men: for though, it is true, life is full of delight when we are in a proſperous eſtate, and we are entertained with great variety of pleaſure, when we look about us, and behold all the good things, the Sun ſhows the bounty of Heaven hath provided for us; yet, believe it, there is no ſatisfaction comparable to that of having done abundance of good, with that which he beſtows upon us. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *But if a man live many years,* and *rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkneſs for they ſhall be many. All that cometh* is *vanity.*] If God therefore ſhould bleſs a man with a healthful Body and a very long Life, I do not forbid him to take the comfort of it; but adviſe him rather, (as I have often done) with a mind free from ſolicitude and carefulneſs, to enjoy all the innocent pleaſures it can afford him: only let them be tempered with theſe *two* reflections: *Firſt,* That as the faireſt Sun that ever ſhone will ſet, and the Night follow it; ſo the moſt merry Life will have an end, and then we muſt lie down in our Graves, longer than we have lived, without the leaſt glimpſe of theſe Joys. *Secondly,* That while we live, nothing which we expect hereafter can give us more contentment than what we enjoy at preſent; and will ſlide away alſo as faſt, and leave us altogether unſatisfied, unleſs we have done ſome good with it. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 9. ¶ *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all theſe* things *God will bring thee into judgment.*] And there is one thing, above all other, which if the moſt Childiſh Youth would conſider, and alway carry in mind, I might give him full liberty, to be as jocund and merry as his frolick Age enclines him; to baniſh melancholy thoughts; and,

and, while he hath the briskeſt taſte of them to invent all manner of pleaſures for his entertainment; denying himſelf nothing that he deſires, and gratifying all his ſenſes: It is this, that he muſt give a ſtrict account of all his actions unto God; who will deal well with him, if he have kept himſelf within his Bounds, and enjoyed only lawful pleaſures, with thankful acknowledgments unto Him, but will puniſh him for all his extravagancies, and forgetfulneſs of Him, with torments infinitely greater than all his ſinful delights. And this, be it known to thee, whoſoever thou art that readeſt this, is a certain truth. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *Therefore remove ſorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy fleſh; for childhood and youth* are *vanity.*] And therefore by the thoughts of this, I adviſe thee alſo, to ſuppreſs and baniſh that fierceneſs, rage, ſadneſs, fretting and vexation, with all ſuch like perturbations of mind, unto which, in the heat of thy blood, thou art ſubject, when any thing croſſes thee (ſuppoſe when thou art only reproved for thy faults) and let no filthy deſires, which then are ſtrong, and would plunge thee in all wickedneſs, ſtay with thee: For, if ſuch care as this be not taken to lay reſtraints upon him, there is nothing more ſenſeleſly fooliſh, raſh, inconſtant and froward to ruin it ſelf, than Man in his Childiſh Youth: when he is in the dawning, as we call it, of his days, and comes firſt acquainted with the pleaſures of this World. *See* Annot. [*k*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Verſe* 1.] *Charity* being the Subject of his Diſcourſe in the firſt *ſix* Verſes of this Chapter (as was obſerved in the *Argument*) he begins with the proper object of it: thoſe who, as our Saviour ſpeaks XIV. *Luke* 14. are not likely to recompence us again. Thus this firſt Verſe (about which there are various conceits) I think may be moſt naturally expounded. And it is a very ancient Expoſition, as appears by the Words of *Gregory Thaumaturgus*; which are theſe in Engliſh: *It is juſt to communicate unto others, &c. for, though for the preſent it may ſeem to be loſt, (and thrown away, as we ſpeak) like the bread that is caſt upon the water; yet, in proceſs of time thy love to Mankind will appear not to be unprofitable and without fruit.* And after the ſame manner *Greg. Nazianzen* in after-times (Orat. XIX. pag. 298.) ſpeaking of the liberality of his Father to the Poor; ſaith, He proceeded upon this Maxim: That it is much better, for the ſake of thoſe who may be worthy, to give to thoſe who are unworthy, than for fear of beſtowing our Charity upon the unworthy, let worthy people want it. To which that ſeems (ſaith he) to belong, which we read in *Solomon* [*Caſt thy bread upon the water*] *Which is not thrown away and quite loſt in the account of him that juſtly eſtimates things; but is ſent thither where all that we do is laid up; and ſhall in due ſeaſon meet us again, though we think not of it.*

And, to ſtrengthen this, it is obſerved by ſome, that *waters* in Scripture ſignifie great affliction and miſery, XVIII. *Pſal.* 17. LXVI. 12. And therefore the ſenſe of the Proverb is not, of ſowing in a fertile Ground, by the Rivers; or in a Soil well watered, from whence men naturally expect a fruitful Crop (as ſome expound it) but of ſowing (*i. e.* giving alms) there, from whence we expect no fruit; no more than if we threw the Seed in a rapid River; in which it is carried away, no body knows whither, and ſeems utterly loſt.

And ſo it may be applied alſo to ungrateful people; as I have touched in the Paraphraſe: and I ſhall not trouble the Reader with other Expoſitions, which may be found in moſt Commentators; only naming this of *Maldonate* (which agrees well enough with that which I have followed) *give to the poor, whoſe miſeries are ſo great that their faces are all wet and beſmeared with tears.* And though there be many of them, be not ſparing, if thou art able to receive them; for *waters* ſignifie ſometime a multitude of people, in the Scripture Language. But that's the ſenſe of the next Verſe; and therefore upon the *face of the waters*, is as much as upon thoſe, *who will be gone preſently*, like the Waters of a River; and never bring any thing back to us, to reward us: if they do, is more than could be expected.

As for the Word *Bread* it ſignifies any benefit, whereby the poor may be ſupported: eſpecially all ſorts of Food (1 *Sam.* XIV. 24. where it comprehends *honey*, and every thing that was edible) more particularly, that Food which is made of Corn, III. *Gen.* 19. and from thence ſignifies *Corn* it ſelf, of which Bread is made, XXVIII. *Iſai.* 28. And ſo St. *Hierom* here expounds it; agreeable to what I ſaid above, of ſowing ſeed in the Water.

[*b*] *Ver.* 2.] And as in the firſt Verſe he has reſpect to the *quality* of the perſons, unto whom we are to give; ſo here to the *number* of them, and the *quantity* of our Alms; which is expected perhaps by a great multitude. Yet let not that damp it (ſaith he) out of a fancy that it will undo us; to relieve them all: but, if we be able, let us help them; and though more ſtill come when we have extended our Charity according to our utmoſt ability, let us rather go beyond it (as the Apoſtle ſaith the *Macedonian* Chriſtians did, 2 *Cor.* VIII. 3.) than let miſerable Creatures periſh. Thus *Greg. Nazianzen* ſeems to underſtand theſe Words *Seven, yea eight. Seven* is a complete number; *eight* added to it denotes ſomething above that which we account perfection. His Words are theſe, that *his Father gave not only, τῶν περιττῶν, out of his ſuperfluity: but τῶν ἀναγκαίων, out of his neceſſaries; according to the preſcription of* Solomon, *Give a portion not only to ſeven; but if an eighth came, he was not here ſparing: but much more ready to give, than others are to get.* In ſhort, he means give *moſt liberally* δαψιλῶς, as *Greg. Thaumaturgus* here expreſſes it, *not ſparingly*, but *profuſely*, I omit other Gloſſes upon the Verſe; and the Criticiſm which ſome make upon the Word *portion*: which they

think alludes, to what was ſent from Feaſts unto the poor, or thoſe that were abſent; of which there is no certainty. I will only note, that here again *Solomon* contradicts the vulgar Principle upon which covetous Wretches move; and directs the quite contrary. They think all is loſt, that is given away in Charity: no ſuch matter, ſaith the Preacher, (*v.* 1.) the fruit of it will be found hereafter, beyond what can be imagined. O, ſaith the covetous man again, I know not what will be hereafter: now I have enough, but in the latter end of my life I may want; and therefore it is beſt to ſave whilſt I may. No, ſaith the Preacher, for that very reaſon, give; becauſe thou knoweſt not what may be hereafter; when that may be taken away from thee, which now thou wilt not beſtow upon needy people, &c.

[c] *V.* 3. In this Verſe, he illuſtrates both the *Duty*, and the *reaſon* of it. The former by the *Clouds*, which are a fit Emblem of Charity: the ſecond, by the *Trees*; which can bring forth Fruit no longer than they continue joined to their Root; from which being ſeperated, they bear no more, nor can be fixed to their Root, as the Clouds may be filled with Water, again. So I have interpreted the latter part of this Verſe: which *Grotius* underſtands as if it meant no more than the foregoing: *Do good to men without diſtinction; like him who, when he cuts down a a Tree, regards not which way it falls.* I omit other Interpretations, and ſhall only mention *Maldonate's* Gloſs upon this Verſe, which is ingenious enough. He urges us, ſaith he, to do good, while we live, by two Reaſons. *Firſt*, From the *profit of it*, becauſe we ſhall receive more than we give; like the Clouds, which receive from the Earth but a thin Vapour; which they return to it in moſt copious Showers. The *ſecond*, from the *impoſſibility* of being in a capacity to do good when we are dead; for then, like a Tree, we muſt continue as we are when Death ſeizes us: and never be reſtored to our former condition again. *Corranus* alone (as far as I can find) expounds the latter part thus, in his Annotations: *A Tree in what place ſoever it is planted, there abides, and brings forth Fruit: and ſo ought we to help others by all manner of means: in whatſoever place or time we live.* And he takes *North* and *South*, for all Parts of the World. If any think fit to apply this, unto the unalterable condition wherein we muſt remain in the other World (like a Tree cut down, which if it fall toward the North, cannot change its poſture, and turn to the South) they cannot follow a fitter Gloſs upon the Words, than this of *Luther's*. *If the Lord find thee in the South; that is, fruitful and rich in good works, it will be well: but if in the North; that is, barren, of good works, it will be ill with thee. Howſoever thou art found, ſo ſhalt thou be judged; and ſo thou ſhalt likewiſe receive.*

[d] *V.* 4.] And then follows here an Admonition to take the firſt opportunity of doing good; and not to defer it becauſe now it may ſeem unſeaſonable, and we fanſie it may do better another time. Which the Lord *Bacon* extends unto all other things, as well as Alms. *There is no greater, or more frequent impediment of action* (ſaith he, in the Concluſion of the Firſt Chapter of the VIIIth. Book of *Advancement of Learning*) *than an over curious obſervation of decency; and of that other Ceremony, attending on it, which is too ſcrupulous election of time and opportunity. For* Solomon *ſaith excellently, He that obſerveth the Wind, &c. We muſt make opportunity, oftner than find it.*

And thus that great Prince *Xerxes* (otherwiſe not very prudent, ſpeaks very diſcreetly in *Herodotus* L. VII.) *Be not fearful of all things; nor conſider every thing minutely; for if in the conſideration of buſineſs, thou wilt weigh every thing alike, thou ſhalt never be able to do any thing.* And thus *Melanchon* underſtands this place, *As events are not in our power* (which he takes to be the meaning of *v.* 3.) *ſo he that will have certain and circumſcribed events* (that is, ſuch and ſuch things come to paſs) *before he act, will never attempt any thing.*

And ſo a great Divine of our own expounds it; "If we will ſuſpend our reſolution, till we "can bethink our ſelves, of ſomething free "from all inconveniencies; in moſt of our "deliberations, we ſhall never reſolve upon "any thing at all: God having ſo tempered "things, that every commodity hath its in-"commodiouſneſs, every conveniency ſome in-"convenience attending it; which many times, "all the wit, and induſtry of man is not able "to ſever." Biſhop *Sanderſon's* Sermon upon 1 *Corinth.* X. 24. *p.* 245.

Saint *Hierom* alſo elegantly accomodates theſe Words to negligent Paſtors; who will not preach, but when the people are very deſirous to hear; and there is a fair Gale breathing to favour their deſign. And gives this Advice to us, Do not ſay, *this is a fit time, that is unprofitable: for we are ignorant, what is the way, and what is the will of the Spirit, which diſpenſeth all things.*

[e] *V.* 5.] In this Verſe he ſeems to purſue the ſame Metaphor of the Wind, which blows uncertainly; and no body knows whence, nor from what cauſes. And therefore from our ignorance of that, and indeed of all other things, which we are here converſant withal; of our own Soul, for inſtance, (which our Tranſlators underſtand by the Word *Ruach, Spirit*) and of our own Body, or of that *vis formatrix*, how it goes about its Work, to make this Body of ours in the Womb, which may poſſibly be meant by *Spirit* (XXXIII. *Job* 4. CIV. *Pſal.* 30.) *Solomon* perſuades us not to preſume to know how God intends to order the courſe of this World, in his over-ruling Providence; and therefore to do our Duty, and leave events to Him.

[f] *V.* 6.] Imitating the Husbandman (with which Metaphor he began this Diſcourſe, and now concludes it) who not knowing which will proſper, ſows both early Corn and late. So *Symmachus* underſtands this Verſe, to be an alluſion to thoſe that ſow ſome very forward Seed; which perhaps may hit, when

when that which is ſown at the ordinary time doth not: Or perhaps both may ſucceed and bring forth Fruit, to their great enriching. Others take *morning and evening*, only to ſignifie all times.

[g] *V.* 7.] I have continued this Verſe with the foregoing; and ſuppoſed (what all Interpreters do in the *third* and *fourth* Verſes) that the compariſon is imperfect: there being only the θεσις (as *Hermogenes* ſpeaks) the Propoſition of the Sentence, and the ὑπόδοσις (that which anſwers unto it) left to be made by the Reader: Which I have ſupplied from the ſenſe of the whole foregoing Diſcourſe in this Chapter.

Others think a new Diſcourſe here begins for the Concluſion of the whole Book; and that after all he had ſaid of happineſs, he adviſes every one to think of another life, and not expect to find it in this.

Or, as ſome underſtand him, his meaning is, *Now you have ſeen, wherein happineſs doth not, and wherein it doth conſiſt; therefore do not either imagine there is none at all here in this World, or that it is greater than really it is: But take a middle courſe, which I have ſhown you, and look upon this life as having pleaſure in it, but not abſolutely perfect; yet ſuch as our condition will permit; begun here, and to be completed in another World.*

[h] *V.* 8.] The beginning of this Verſe I have expounded according to the Hebrew, where the Words run thus, as St. *Hierom* himſelf tranſlates them, *If a man live many years, let him rejoyce in all theſe things*, &c. And the latter part of the Verſe, I have ſuppoſed, contains two Motives to moderation in our preſent enjoyments, and to make us think of doing ſome good with them, as the higheſt pleaſure of all. Becauſe they will have an end, when we can no longer enjoy them; and becauſe, while we have them, they run away apace, as all that follows will do; and leave us empty and diſſatisfied, unleſs we have made a good uſe of them: upon which we may reflect, when they are gone, with ſome pleaſure.

[i] *V.* 9.] To thoſe Motives, he here adds the moſt conſiderable thing of all: which is expounded *two* ways by Interpreters. Some taking theſe Words as a *permiſſion*, under ſuch reſtraints as he mentions in the end of the Verſe: others: as *ironically*, and *ſarcaſtically* (as the Greek Phraſe is) ſpoken; by way of mockage, and bitter ſcoff. The two *firſt* Phraſes (*rejoice*, and *let thy heart cheer thee*) incline to the former way; being commonly uſed in a good ſenſe: the two *laſt* (*walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thy eyes*) unto the other way, being commonly uſed in a bad. Therefore the ſcope of the place, and the coherence muſt determine it. And as the LXX and St. *Hierom* go the firſt way; ſo it agrees beſt, in my opinion, with what went before; and therefore ſo I have paraphraſed it. And conſidering that they are two different Words in the beginning of the Verſe, which we tranſlate as if they were the ſame (viz. *young man*, and *youth*) I have not done amiſs, I think, but expreſſed them more ſignificantly, by theſe Words, *childiſh youth*. And ſo they are diſtinguiſhed in the laſt Verſe; where that Word which here we tranſlate *youth*, we more truly tranſlate *childhood*: which yet goes before youth.

[k] *V.* 10.] Here I have followed the judgment of St. *Hierom*; who under *anger* (or *grief*) comprehends all the perturbations of the mind: and under *evil of the fleſh*, all the hurtful pleaſures of the Body. And accordingly I have expounded the whole Verſe, with reſpect to the danger Youth is in, by the fiery motions of both ſorts: the former of which incline men to imitate the Wild Beaſts; the other ſink them, into the condition of the dulleſt Brutes.

The word we here tranſlate *youth* ſignifies the *peep of day*, in our Language; the *appearing of the morning*: and therefore is to be underſtood of our entrance upon the moſt pleaſant time of our life. Which, as well as *childhood*, is but *vanity*; that is, preſently vaniſhes (as ſome will have it) and will be ſoon gone: or rather, Childhood and Youth, ſignifying all that is done in that Age of our life; the meaning is, it is an Age of great levity, folly and indiſcretion, &c.

And therefore, as *Luther* obſerves, the great care of mankind ſhould be to ſeaſon *Youth* with right Opinions and a good ſenſe of things; and then it is not to be denied all pleaſures, of which it is very deſirous; much leſs ſhut up from the very ſight of them, for it abhors ſolitude. And this is to begin at the wrong end of Education; which muſt be applied firſt to the Mind, not to the Body: And when the Mind is well tinctured, the Body will be eaſily governed. That is, neither follow filthy pleaſures; nor be carried away with furious paſſions; &c. the benefit of which will be unſpeakable; for they that live pleaſantly and quietly in Youth, are likely to arrive at and enjoy a comfortable old Age.

Some begin the XIIth Chapter at this Verſe, and others begin it with the foregoing: but I have followed our Tranſlation, and the moſt Interpreters.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

He continues his Advice to young men, (begun in the two laſt Verſes of the foregoing Chapter) wiſhing them to ſeaſon their minds with ſuch an early ſenſe of God, and of their obligations to Him that it might govern them in all their ways; and be a comfort to them in Old age, which (by a long deſcription of it) he ſhews will be a melancholy time at beſt. After which Diſcourſe, he concludes the Book, with a brief ſumm of the ſcope and deſign of it; inſerting ſomething concerning the Author, which might diſpoſe the Reader to attend the more heedfully, unto the concluſion of the whole matter.

Verſe 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.*] The beſt Coun-

ſel

ſel therefore that I can give every man is this, That he would awaken, and preſerve in mind perpetually, an awful ſenſe of God; unto whom he is ſo deeply indebted that he received his very Being from Him; and therefore let him apply himſelf faithfully and affectionately to his ſervice, in his moſt vigorous Age, as ſoon as ever he can conſider that he is not his own, but God's, who formed him in his Mother's Womb, took him thence, and brought him up to be a man: Do not defer this weighty buſineſs, till thou art ſick, or all thy faculties ſo broken by the infirmities of Old Age, that though it laſt ſeveral years, yet they ſhall prove flat and dull, irkſom and tedious to thee: and no pleaſure at all left in them, but only the remembrance of a well-ſpent-life; without which, inſtead of thanking God, thou wilt be apt to do nothing, but complain, or groan under the weight of one evil or other that falls upon thee. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *While the ſun, or the light, or the moon, or the ſtars be not darkned, nor the clouds return after the rain:* For what joy can a man have, or what miſery can he be without (and therefore what folly is it not to think of God before that time) when the natural heat and vigour is quite ſpent, and all the powers and faculties of Soul and Body in ſuch a languiſhing condition, that he is altogether unfit for the Offices of piety; particularly for the acknowledgement of God's benefits, the very remembrance of which is ſlipt out of his mind, or he hath but a dull perception of them: being no more ſenſible of the benefit of the Sun it ſelf, when it gives the brighteſt light, than he is of the Moon or Stars; but the day is as ſad, and as full of pains and heavineſs to him, as the night: and there is no end of them, no intermiſſion; but they ſucceed one another, as the Clouds do in a rainy Seaſon, when one is no ſooner emptied, but another is gathered, and ready to diſcharge it ſelf in Showers. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *In the day when the keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves, and the grinders ceaſe becauſe they are few, and thoſe that look out of the windows be darkned.*] Is this a proper time to be allotted to the ſervice of God, when a man cannot ſerve himſelf? his hands being ſtruck with a Palſie, and made unable either to feed or defend his Body; his feet bending under the weight of it, having loſt their power to ſupport him; his teeth likewiſe ſo rotten, or worn away, or fallen out, that they cannot chew his meat; and the ſight of his eyes, which were wont to ſhew him things at a great diſtance, now ſo failing him, that he cannot know one man from another, though they ſtand hard by him. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *And the doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreets, when the ſound of the grinding is low, and he ſhall riſe up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of muſick ſhall be brought low;*] Is this the time to gain acceptance with God, when he is deſpiſed by men; and excluded the publick Aſſemblies, becauſe his voice is ſo low, that no Body can hear him? Nay, his Lips look as if they were cloſed, and fall ſo inward, that he can but mumble, by reaſon of the loſs of his Teeth, the weakneſs of his Lungs, and the defect of other Inſtruments of Speech: Nor can he recruit himſelf as he was wont by reſt; for ſound ſleep departs from his eyes, and he awakes as early as the Birds, but is not pleaſed at all with their Songs: his hearing being ſo dull and flat, that he is not moved by the beſt Muſick in the World; though he liſten and incline his ears unto it, with never ſo much diligence. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Alſo when they ſhall be afraid of* that which is *high, and fears* ſhall be *in the way, and the almond tree ſhall flouriſh, and the graſshopper ſhall be a burden, and deſire ſhall fail: becauſe man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the ſtreets.*] For joy and all ſuch pleaſant paſſions being fled away, melancholy fear alone remains; which makes him ſcarce dare to tread in the High-way, much leſs, (his head is ſo giddy) to go up a Pair of Stairs; nay, he thinks himſelf unſafe in the ſtrongeſt Fortreſs: Such is the feebleneſs of Old Age, which looks venerably by its Grey Hairs, but they are an early ſign of approaching death; and are made contemptible by his crumpled Shoulders, Hips and Back: which as they are of themſelves a ſufficient Load, ſo are relieved and ſupported by no bodily pleaſures; the very deſires of which now fail him: for there is but a very ſhort ſtep between him and his Grave; unto which if he be carried with the uſual Solemnities, it is all his Friends can do for him. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *Or ever the ſilver cord be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the ciſtern.*] Remember therefore thy Creator, while the noble Faculties of ſenſe and motion remain intire, and are ſtrong and lively; for the time will come (and that will be very unfit for this, or indeed any other buſineſs) when they will be totally diſabled: the Nerves, for inſtance, will ſhrink up and be diſpirited; the Brain it ſelf, and all thoſe precious Veſſels wherein it is contained, be of no uſe at all unto thee: For the very Fountain of Life, the Heart, will fail, and the Veins and Arteries no longer carry the Blood round the Body; but the motion will ceaſe, by the decay of that power, which now thruſts it forward in a continual Circulation. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was: and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God who gave it.*] And then, what remains, but that the Soul and Body being parted, they go to their ſeveral Originals? The Body, tho' now ſo fair a Fabrick, to the Earth out of which it was taken, (according to that ancient Doom paſſed upon it, *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return*) but the Soul unto God, to be judged by him, according to what it hath done in the Body, ſince He ſent it thither. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. ¶ *Vanity of vanities, ſaith the preacher; all is vanity.*] And if this be the Concluſion of all our labours, I have reaſon to conclude this Book as I began it, and liſten I beſeech you again, to him, who proclaims nothing to you but what he hath proved in this Diſcourſe; that there is no ſolid ſatisfaction to be found in any thing here below; where all things are both full of care and trouble, as well as uncertain and periſhing: and therefore it is the height of folly, to take great thought for this preſent life; and to lay up nothing for the life to come. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver.

Ver. 9. *And moreover, becauſe the preacher was wiſe, he ſtill taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and ſought out,* and *ſet in order many proverbs.*] Perhaps you may ſtill think otherwiſe; and therefore I have this now to add (and ſo ſhall ſumm up all I have ſaid) that I am as likely to judge aright, as another man; being indued with wiſdom from above, by an extraordinary gift of God (*1 Kings* III. 12. IV. 30, *&c.*) whoſe Goodneſs alſo I have imitated, in communicating my knowledge freely unto others: Nay, (knowing that by ſloth or envy the greateſt wiſdom may be loſt) the more I underſtood, the more diligent I was in informing others; Nor did Divine Illuminations make me either neglect my own Studies, or other mens inventions, but I liſtned unto all from whom I might hope to learn any thing; and both weighed what they ſaid, and alſo made an exact ſearch into things my ſelf: of which, that not only the preſent Age, but Poſterity alſo might reap the benefit, I have gathered together, and aptly diſpoſed and fitted to all capacities, abundance of excellent pithy Sentences, for inſtruction in Wiſdom and Vertue (*1 Kings* IV. 32.) *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *The preacher ſought to find out acceptable words, and* that which was *written* was *upright,* even *words of truth.*] Thus I, that preach theſe things, have imployed my pains, in ſeeking (with no leſs diligence than covetous men do for money) both the moſt pleaſant, and the moſt uſeful, and moſt certain Knowledge: and having found what I ſought, I may ſafely affirm, that, Nothing is ſaid by me, but what ought to be moſt acceptable, being apt to give the greateſt contentment and delight: Nothing written by me, but what I found in the Divine Writings, or is ſo exactly agreeable thereunto, that it is a ſtraight and faithful Rule of life: there is nothing frivolous or doubtful in them; but they contain the moſt ſolid Wiſdom, as ſure and true as truth it ſelf. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *The words of the wiſe* are *as goads, and as nails faſtned* by *the maſters of aſſemblies,* which *are given from one ſhepherd.*] And there is the ſame power in them (as there is wont to be in all the acute Sayings of thoſe that are wiſe and good) to excite and ſtir up the minds of ſlothful men to the practice of Vertue; that there is in a Goad to prick the dull Oxe forward, to draw the Plow: Nor do they only ſting and move the mind for the preſent; but are apt to ſtick as faſt in the memory, as Nails do when they are driven into a Board: and to collect alſo the thoughts, affections, and reſolutions unto one certain end; eſpecially when they are faſtned by the skilful hand of thoſe who rule the Aſſemblies of God's people; and are ruled themſelves by one and the ſame ſupreme Governour, whoſe Holy Spirit directs them all. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. *And further, by theſe, my ſon be admoniſhed of making many books* there is *no end, and much ſtudy* is *a wearineſs of the fleſh.*] Therefore my Son (or whoſoever thou art that ſhall read theſe things, whoſe happineſs I wiſh as my own) be adviſed by me, and not only believe theſe things, but reſt contented with ſuch uſeful Knowledge; and do not trouble thy ſelf, either in compoſing or reading many Books: For all that is needful to inſtruct men how to be happy, may be comprized in a few wiſe Precepts, and if thou extendeſt thy deſires beyond this, thou mayſt turn over infinite Volumes, which are encreaſing continually; and ſerve only to diſtract thy mind, and tire thy ſpirits, and impair thy health; but yield little profit, after the expence of a great deal of pains and time. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 13. ¶ *Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this* is *the whole* duty *of man.*] Let us draw up all then, that can be ſaid in this matter, into as ſmall a compaſs as is poſſible: If thou wouldſt be happy, preſerve in thy mind ſuch an awful ſenſe of God, as to have a greater regard to Him, both as thy Creator and Governour, and as thy Judge, than to any thing in this World; and, dreading his diſpleaſure, not only worſhip Him religiouſly, but obſerve all His Commandments: For, as unto this all men are bound, ſo in this conſiſts all their Duty, and their whole happineſs; and therefore they ought to make this their main buſineſs, and employ their beſt endeavours in it. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 14. *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether* it be *good, or whether* it be *evil.*] As they would with all ſeriouſneſs, did they but believe and remember what is moſt certainly true, That, though now the wicked and the good ſometimes fare alike, yet there will be a notorious diſtinction one day, made between them; when God (whoſe knowledge nothing can eſcape, and out of whoſe memory nothing can ſlip) will paſs an exact Sentence upon every thing we do here in this World, though never ſo ſecret and known to none but Himſelf: and then no evil thing, though only deſigned and never actually committed, ſhall go unpuniſhed; and no good thing, though only heartily intended for want of power to accompliſh it, ſhall be unrewarded. *See* Annot. [*o*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Verſe* 1.] From the conſideration of what he had ſaid in the Concluſion of the foregoing Chapter, *that Youth is attended with folly, and folly attended with deſtruction* (as *Greg. Thaumaturgus* excellently explains thoſe Words) he begins this with the moſt weighty Leſſon: which ought to be perpetually inculcated, and beaten into the mind and memory of young men, *viz.* That they would reflect ſo far as to conſider, who gave them their being; and what, upon that account they owe unto Him: who as He is the ſole Author of all things that give us any delight; ſo He is of all the abilities and faculties, which make us capable to take pleaſure in them: and the ſole Diſpoſer likewiſe of all opportunities, that bring us and thoſe Delights together.

All this may well be comprehended in the Word *Creator* (if this place be compared with XL. *Iſa.* 28. XLV. 7, 18. LXV. 17, 18.) Which being in the *Hebrew* a Word of the Plural Number, ſome from thence draw the Myſtery of the Holy Trinity, which I cannot

certainly ſay is here intended, becauſe it is very ordinary in the Scripture to put the Plural for the Singular; eſpecially when God is ſpoken of. Thus when the Iſraelites had made the golden Calf, they ſaid, *Theſe are thy Gods, O Iſrael*, &c. (ſo we tranſlate it XXXII. *Exod.* 4.) as if there had been more Gods than one in that Calf. But it ſhould be tranſlated, *This is thy God, O Iſrael*; as appears by what follows, *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*: ſignifying they worſhipped this Image in Him, who had wrought that great deliverance for them. And thus *Jonathan* there underſtands it; and *Theodoret* upon 1 Book of *Kings*, Queſt. 10.

More places, like to this, are obſerved by *Bochartus* (L. II. *de Animal. Sacr.* C. 34. P. 1.) in whom the Learned Reader may find many ſuch Latin Words, that are only of the *Plural*, not *Singular* Number. And I will only mention one remarkable, (which he might have added 1 *Sam.* XXVIII. 9.) where the Woman ſays, ſhe ſaw *Gods* aſcending out of the Earth: and *Saul* thereupon asks her, *What form is he of?* underſtanding ſhe ſaw a ſingle perſon.

But whatever becomes of this, we Chriſtians (to whom this Myſtery is now plainly revealed) ought when we read ſuch places as theſe, to think of the obligations we have unto God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, into whoſe Name we are baptized. And not only to *conſider* ſuch things as are above-mentioned; but to be *moved* and *affected* with them (for that is here included in the Word *Remember*) according unto their weight and importance.

And to do this betime, the firſt thing we do; becauſe *the days of our youth*, are our beſt and choiceſt days (as the Word in the Hebrew ſignifies; whence in 2 *Sam.* VI. 8. where *David* is ſaid to gather all the *choſen men*, the LXX hath νεανίας, the *young men* in *Iſrael*) in which we are apt to take the greateſt delight in our ſelves, or in any thing truly delightful: our ſpirits being then moſt freſh, lively and vigorous. So that the meaſure of our delight, whether in our ſelves or in any thing without us, being then truly taken, it would conſtrain us unto an equal delight in Him, who is the Author of both, and unto a correſpondent gratulation for them. Whereas, if we defer this *remembrance* till Old Age come upon us, when life grows a burden, and the wonted delights of it are either irkſome or inſipid (unpleaſant, or without all taſte or reliſh) our thankfulneſs for them will be but faint; our gratulation worthleſs; our Devotion cold and lumpiſh: as Dr. *Jackſon* excellently gloſſes upon theſe Words, B. XI. upon the Creed, c. 33. Which he had expreſſed long before, more briefly in his *Treatiſe of Faith*, Chap. 8. p. 125. thus, *The Inventory of what we have received from God in our Creation, ſhould be taken in thoſe days wherein we moſt delight; becauſe then the Characters of his Bleſſings beſtowed upon us, and their true worth, are moſt freſh and ſenſible in all our faculties: well knowing, that if we defer this Survey till Old Age, in which life ſelf becomes a burden, our return of thanks for fruition of it, and the unpleaſant appertinencies, will be but wearyiſh.* And plainer ſtill in his II^d Book upon God's *Attributes*, Ch. XI. p. 95. *Then the prints of God's Creative Power, are moſt freſh in our Nature; and might tranſmit a fairer Copy, and truer eſtimate of the Creator's Goodneſs unto Old Age, than Old Age can take any*, &c. Which I have repeated the oftner, in ſeveral forms of ſpeech, in hope that one or other of them may touch the heart of young men, and excite them by frequent reflection upon the preſent comforts of health and ſtrength, upon the activity of their Body, the quickneſs of their ſenſe and ſpirit, to ingroſs them deeply in their memory; before the *evil days come.*

So *Solomon* calls our decrepit Old Age; both becauſe they are void of all pleaſure, as he ſaith in the following Words; and becauſe they are attended likewiſe with ſo many inconveniences and miſeries, that it is hard to number them. But he gives us ſome account of them, in his admirable Deſcription of decrepit Age, *v.* 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. which abundantly confirms that ſpeech of *Cicero* in his Book *de Senectute*, that Old Age proves ſo odious unto moſt men, *ut Onus ſe Ætna gravius dicant ſuſtinere*, that they complain of a load that lies heavier than Mount *Ætna* upon them.

[*b*] *V.* 2.] Theſe infirmities he demonſtrates to be very great, becauſe decrepit Age conſiſts in the univerſal decay of the whole frame of Nature: Which I take to be the meaning of the *Sun, the Light, the Moon and Stars*, being darkned. For as in a Body Politick, the extinction or falling down of theſe ſignifies, in the Prophetical Language, the ſubverſion of that frame of Government (as, to omit abundance of other places, may be ſeen in what *Iſaiah* ſaith concerning *Babylon*, XIII. 10. and *Ezekiel* concerning *Egypt*, XXXII. 7, 8.) ſo the darkning of theſe in the Natural Body of man, ſignifies, in my judgment, its total decay and nearneſs to a diſſolution: the tumbling (as we ſpeak) of an Old Man into his Grave; like a ruinous old houſe which can ſtand no longer; for ſo the Metaphor is carried on, *v.* 3.

And then the *return of Clouds after the Rain*, refers to the diſmal condition a man is in at that time: when one trouble treads upon the heels of another: which is no ſooner gone, but the like, or a new one, comes in its room. And ſo the Words may be tranſlated, *The Clouds return, and after that the Rain*: That is, there is a ſucceſſion of miſery, of grief, pain, or weakneſs, drawing on one another.

There are ſome who apply the darkning of *Sun, Moon and Stars*, to the mind of man (as one would think, indeed, he ſhould ſay ſomething of that; and all the following deſcription belonging wholly to the Body, we muſt find it here or not at all) but ſtill I conceive that he intends only in general, to ſignifie the failing of the mind in all its faculties and powers; without a reſpect to ſome particular diſtinct faculty in each of theſe Words. But they who think the inward powers are here intended, are not content to reſt in ſuch a ge-

a general meaning; but will have ſomething in particular ſignified, by every one of them. And then they do but gueſs, which gives me the liberty to interpoſe my conjectures alſo: that by the *Sun* may be meant the Soul it ſelf; by the *Light*, its Underſtanding; by the *Moons*, the Will; by the *Stars*, all the Notions in the Mind and Memory, with all the affections and paſſions in the Will: juſt as *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, in *Joſeph*'s Dream, ſignified his *Father*, and *Mother*, and *Brethren*. And ſo the ſenſe of this Verſe is, the Mind of man grows feeble in all its powers; the Underſtanding dim ſighted, the Memory forgetful; the Reaſon weak and childiſh (giving ſuch a feeble light, that it can neither direct our ſelves nor others) the Will liſtleſs in all its deſires, dull about our greateſt concerns, wavering and inconſtant in all its reſolutions, *&c.*

But I judge it more reaſonable, as I ſaid, to reſt in the Interpretation firſt mentioned (which I am ſure is agreeable to the holy Language in other places) that hereby is only repreſented in general, the univerſal decay of the faculties of the upper part of man, his Soul. Which ſenſe I have comprehended together with the other in my Paraphraſe: and not neglected this, in which others acquieſce, that theſe Words ſignifie *the miſeries an Old man feels, both night and day.* As for thoſe who hereby underſtand the dimneſs of the eyes, it being expreſſed afterward, *v.* 3. I have taken no notice of their ſenſe: But another there is, which is worth mentioning. For the meaning may be, *There is nothing but darkneſs:* i. e. a moſt uncomfortable condition; like that, when the Heavens are clouded day and night (as they were in St. *Paul*'s Voyage, XXVII. *Acts* 20.) and when one Cloud hath ſpent it ſelf in the Tempeſt, another immediately ſucceeds it.

[c] *V.* 3.] As in the foregoing Verſe he gave a general deſcription of the decay of the whole Body (and of the internal faculties of the mind together therewith) ſo here he enters into the Particulars. And conceiving the Body to be like an Houſe or Tabernacle (unto which it is frequently compared, not only in the Scripture, but all other Authors) he reſembles the Shoulders, Arms and Hands, to the *Keepers of the Houſe:* becauſe by them we defend our ſelves from dangers; adminiſter both Food and Phyſick; exerciſe all manner of Arts and Manufactures (as we call them) as long as they have any ſtrength remaining in them. Which Old Age takes away, the Nerves, Tendons and Ligaments ſo flagging, that theſe *Keepers* quiver and ſhake (*tremble* we render it) and grow ſo uſeleſs that we can no way help our ſelves or others with them.

And then he compares the Thighs, Legs and Feet, to *ſtrong men:* they being the Supporters and Pillars, as it were, of the whole Fabrick, which hold it up; till Old Age quite diſables them for this Office, and makes the Knees *bend*, under the burden of the Body alone.

The Reaſon of which follows; in that the *Grinders fail*, &c. in which Metaphor he compares the *Teeth* in the Jaws above and below, to the upper and nether Mill-ſtone. For they by cutting, breaking and chewing of the Meat, prepare it to be diſſolved in the Stomach, and turned into nouriſhment (as the Corn is ground between thoſe Stones into Meal, and ſo prepared for making Bread, and other ſuch like uſes) but in time drop out of their Sockets; or are broken, ſo that they can grind no longer.

And the like decay we find in the ſight of the eyes; which he means by *thoſe that look of the Windows.* All thoſe *Coats, Humours, and Nerves*, that make up the eyes: which are ſet in two *holes* (as the Word is) or *hollow places* in the Forehead (like the Windows in the houſe) and have a round hole alſo in the midſt of them, called the *Pupil* of the Eye (like a Caſement) through which all things are tranſmitted to the inward ſenſe of Seeing. Until the *Skins*, and the *humours* alſo, grow too thick; and the very Figure of the Eye, as ſome have obſerved, be changed, by the dryneſs of the chryſtalline Humour: and then the houſe is *darkned.* *Ariſtotle* in his *Problems* (Sect. 31. *Quæſt.* 14.) expreſſes it thus, in ſhort, οἱ γηρῶντες ἐκ ὀξὺ ὁρῶσι, ὅτι ἡ ὄψις παχυμερὴς γίνεται, *&c.* when men grow into years, their ſight grows dull, becauſe *in the eyes of Old men, the Skin is both hard, and alſo rugged; ſo that their ſight is obſcured.*

[d] *V.* 4.] This Verſe hath a greater difficulty in it, eſpecially in the begining, *and the doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreets, when the ſound of the grinding is low.* But the LXX ſuggeſt an unexceptionable ſenſe of this Paſſage, in my Opinion, which is; that *they are ſhut out of all publick meetings, becauſe of the lowneſs of their voice, which formerly was as loud as a Mill.* And there is little reaſon to doubt, but by *doors* are meant the lips (it being a frequent expreſſion in Scripture) and by the *lowneſs of the ſound of grinding*, the lowneſs of the voice, from the loſs of teeth, or the weakneſs of reſpiration; in ſhort, from the defect there is in the organs of Speech.

Nor do I ſee why *Maldonate*'s Tranſlation may not be allowed, which is ſtill more ſimple, (and therefore I have taken notice of it in my Paraphraſe) *the lips are ſhut without* (ſo בשוק may be tranſlated *foris, extrinſecus*) that is, they ſink and are compreſſed; *when the voice grows weak and tremulous, becauſe of thoſe that grind*; that is, by the falling of the teeth. Thus he. But it may more exactly be tranſlated thus, by the falling low of the voice, of which the teeth are the principal inſtruments. And the whole, I have ſometimes thought, may not incongruouſly be tranſlated in this manner: *His lips are ſhut in his mouth* (for the mouth is the *ſtreet* or high way into this houſe of which *Solomon* is ſpeaking) *by the falling down of the voice of grinding*; i. e. the voice that is made by grinding the Air, as it were between the teeth, and the roof of the mouth, *&c.*

It might be referred to *the eating meat ſeldom, becauſe of his bad digeſtion* (the meat being ground in the Stomach

Stomach as in a Mill) if the word *Voice* or *Sound* would agree to this. Which renders Dr. *Smith*'s Interpretation very difficult, in my judgment: Who by *doors* underſtands all the *inlets* and *outlets* of the Body; and by *ſtreets*, the open ways and paſſages in the Body; in which the matter of nouriſhment is conveyed, and paſſeth, without lett or moleſtation: and by *ſhutting* theſe doors, the ceaſing from their uſe: and by *grinding*, the digeſtions and concoctions in the Stomach, Bowels, Meſentery, Glandules, *&c.* (all which is well enough, tho' perhaps too philoſophical:) and by the *voice* of theſe concoctions, the natural ſymptoms, ſignificative of digeſtions; all thoſe indications, which demonſtrate the work of Nature is to proceed aright. Which ſeems to me very far fetcht, and too great a ſtraining of the word *voice* or *ſound*: however, I have here mentioned it, that they who are pleaſed with it, may follow that Interpretation, which is very ingenious.

The next Paſſage in this Verſe is eaſier; though it is uncertain, whether he mean that the *chirping of the leaſt Bird* wakes him; or that he wakes early, when the Birds do. For צִפּוֹר ſignifies all kind of Birds, great and ſmall; and may be interpreted of the *Cock*, as well as any other: and the meaning be, *He gets up at the Cock crowing*. This laſt ſeems moſt probable, becauſe, being thick of hearing (as the next Paſſage ſignifies) it cannot be ſuppoſed that the leaſt noiſe diſturbs him. Though I confeſs the meaning may be that a *ſmall noiſe wakes him ſooner, than Thunder would have done in his young days*.

The daughters of Muſick, if it refer to the Parts of the Body, I take not to be thoſe Organs of it which make Muſick; but which receive it, being made. For the Hebrews call that the *Son* of a thing, which is fitted or deſigned for that of which it is ſaid to be the Son. Thus an *Arrow* is called *the Son of the Bow* or Quiver, XLI. Iſai. 19. III. Lament. 13. and *Wheat* called the *Son of the Threſhing-floor*, XXI. Iſai. 18. and ſo the *Daughters of Muſick* may be thoſe parts where Muſick is entertain'd. Yet there is one Objection againſt this which lies in the word *all*: which cannot properly be applied to the ears; becauſe there are but two of them: and we never ſay *all the ears*, but *both the ears*. Which makes ſome think, that hereby we are rather to underſtand all ſorts of Muſick; which are made either by Inſtruments or Voice. But to this it may be anſwered, that the word *all*, refers to the ſeveral parts of the Ear, in which the ſound is formed: both the winding chanels in the outward part, and the Tympanum, and the *three* cavities, and as many little bones in the inward part; together with the auditory Nerve itſelf. All which are manifeſtly contrived on purpoſe to receive Sounds: which are born here, and ſo may be called their *Daughters*: which in Youth are brisk and ſpritely; but are humbled (as the LXX tranſlates it) and flat in Old Age.

There is no neceſſity, I acknowledge, of interpreting this paſſage thus, (though it ſeem moſt agreeable to the reſt of the deſcription) becauſe it may be tranſlated, *the daughters of a Song*: that is, Singing-women *are not valued at all*, by old men: They account them nothing worth; and would not give, as we ſay, a Farthing for them. Old *Barzillai* confeſſes this imperfection, 2 *Sam.* XIX. 35. Which place St. *Hierom* thinks may very well explain this.

[*e*] *V.* 5.] And it is attended with a greater, which is the paſſion of *Fear*: unto which Old Age is very ſubject, from defect of Spirits, weakneſs of Imagination, as well as of Bodily Organs; which are unable to reſiſt any dangers; which Old men alſo are apt to apprehend greater than they really are. For as their heads turn giddy, if they aſcend to any high place, ſo they tremble in the plain way; for fear of a Stone, a Clod, an Hole, any unevenneſs, by the riſing or depreſſion of the Earth (for ſo *Grotius* thinks the Words may be expounded, though the antient Interpreters do not favour it, *He is afraid to ſtumble at the riſing or falling of the Earth*) or he fears he may be puſht down by others, if he do not fall of himſelf; in a word, he knows not what he may meet withal, and therefore fears.

Or it may be expounded, as *Maldonate* takes it, *He never thinks himſelf ſafe, though he be in an high Fortreſs*. Or, dreads an high Wall, though never ſo firm, leſt it ſhould fall upon him. There are ſome that expound the firſt Words of this Verſe thus, *He is afraid of Spirits*. and ſeparate Souls: of thoſe excellent Beings which dwell in the Regions above. That is, *he is ſuperſtitious*; which I look upon as forced.

The next Part of this Deſcription, which we tranſlate *Almond-tree flouriſh*, moſt Interpreters take for his *head growing hoary*, or *white*, like the Bloſſoms of the Almond-tree. Which though it make an Old man look venerable, yet brings the tidings of approaching Death: and is as certain an indication of it, as the Almond-trees bloſſoming is of the Spring; or (as others will have it) of its ſpeedy production of fruit: For it flowered, they ſay, in *February*, and ſhowed its Fruit in *March*; and thence had the name of *ſhached* in Hebrew; from its forward blooming, and haſty ripening into Fruit. And, to ſtrengthen this Interpretation, ſome have obſerved that an *Almond* was anciently called by the Greeks κεφαλωτον, that is, *the head*: from ſome reſemblance which that Fruit hath to it. What that reſemblance ſhould be, I do not underſtand; unleſs it be in the Figure of the Brain: which the Scull being removed, appears like the Shell of the Almond, when the Husk wherein it is incloſed, is peeled away. For thence *Herodianus* of *Alexandria* (as I find in *Athenæus*, L. II. Cap. 12.) derives the common Greek Word Ἀμυγδάλη for an Almond; becauſe next to the green Rind, ὑπὸ ἀμυχαὶ ἔχειν πολλάς, it hath, as it were, a great many cleſts, and looks as if it were ſcarified.

I ſee no apter Interpretation than this unleſs it be that which I ſhall mention below (when I have explained the reſt of this Verſe) or we underſtand it, as St. *Hierom* ſaith ſome did, of the

the *Huckle-bone*; which, by the wasting away of the flesh of the Buttocks, appears, nay thrusts out it self; and makes their very sitting or lying down uneasie to them. And I find an *Arabick* Word of this sound, which signifies a kind of Boat: and may possibly be the Original of the Latin Word *Scapha*.

And this would agree well with the next Words, *the Grashopper shall be a burden*: Which seem to be a description of his stooping under the burden of Old Age; his Shoulders, Hips and Back all bunching out; which is a load great enough for him, without any other. In short *he can scarce bear himself*, as *Melanthon* expounds it: Which *Avenarius* thinks is a literal Translation of the Words, the *Grashopper* or *Locust shall burden it self*; that is, saith he, his *gibbous back*. Which is better than their Glos's, who make it to signifie, he can scarce bear the weight of a Grashopper or Locust. The LXX translate it, *the Locust shall be made fat*; i. e. swell, bunch out, or be burdensome: Which aptly denotes the *knotting of the Joints* (like those of the Locust) and the rising up of the *Vertebræ* (or any such thing in the Body of man) which make his back resemble that of a Locust. And so *Jo. Forsterus* excellently translates it, *ut in curvo incedat dorso, sicut cicada*, that he goes crooked in the back, like a *Grashopper*. *Luther* also had this in his mind (though he did not fully explain it) when he thus glossed upon these Words: *Such an old Man is like a Locust: for his Bones stick out, and his Body is shrunk up; so that he is a mere Image of Death.*

And then the next signifies no more than this, That the greatest bodily pleasures fail; and the member that serves those pleasures is relaxed and flaggs. For the Word *haavijonah* (which we translate *desire*) signifies either the *Fruit* of a Shrub, which the LXX take to be *Capers* (though *avjonath* signifie the Berries of Laurels, Myrtles, and indeed of all the lesser sort of Trees) or that *desire* which it is supposed (according to *Avicenna*) to excite; or that *Knob* in us, which something resembles that Fruit.

There is one Interpretation of these *three* last Clauses which seems to me not at all constrained, but apt enough (only it doth not make them all relate to the parts of the Body, as the rest do) which is that of *de Dieu*; from whom *Junius* before him did not much differ. It is this, *Though the Almond-tree flourish, and the Locust be loadened with fat* (i. e. though the pleasures of the Spring appear and come on apace, making all things else to swell with joy) *it doth not invigorate his blood, nor make it rise, to stir up his desire*, &c.

The reason is, he is just upon the point of leaving all things here, and going to his *long home*. Which signifies either the place to which all men go (*domum seculi*, the house of the whole World, whither all mankind have ever gone, and must go) or the place from whence he came; as *Forsterus* expounds *domum seculi sui*, his old house, out of which he first came forth (thus we translate the Word *olam*, VI. *Jer.* 16.) or that where they must long abide, even till the resurrection of the dead. For their Friends there leave them; and can do nothing more, but mourn for them: as it follows here, *The Mourners go about the Streets.* That is, are preparing for the Funeral; ready to accompany the Herse: or, they already bewail him, as a dead Corps rather than a living man: or, when he is dead, can only give him a solemn Funeral, and openly bewail him; not only at home, but in the Streets. For which purpose they sometimes hired Mourning-men, and Women; who are the *Minstrels* we read of, IX. *Matth.* 23. For *Josephus* saith (L. III. C. 15. of the *Wars of the Jews*) that when *Joppa* was taken, and he reported to be slain, πλειστοι μισθοι αὐλησαι, &c. *there were many Minstrels hired at* Jerusalem, who began to make lamentations in a doleful tone. But *Gierus* in his Treatise of the *mourning of the Hebrews* (p. 320.) thinks *Solomon* doth not here mean the mourning of those that accompanied the Corps to the Grave, nor their walking about in mourning Apparel; but the sad lamentations, which their grief sometimes moved them to make in the very Streets: when they were weary with mourning at home, or put thereby into an extravagant passion; like that which the Jews supposed *Mary* the Sister of *Lazarus* to fall into, when she rose up hastily and went out of the House, XI. *John* 31.

[*f*] *V.* 6.] Now we are to come to the most difficult Verse of all; in which the Wiseman describes this house as falling down: that is, enumerates the evils, which immediately forego Death; of which he would have us think frequently, while the house is in good condition: For those Words *Remember thy Creator*, St. *Hierom* thinks are here again to be repeated; *or ever*, that is, before Death seize on thee, and pull down this earthly Tabernacle and lay it in the dust.

First, *by loosing the silver Cord.* Which some fansie signifies all the *humours of the Body*; which are, as it were, *the Thred of life*; which the Destinies were said to spin out, for a certain time, and then cut off: Others understand by it, *the string of the tongue*: and *Gasper Sanctius* (upon VII. *Cant.* V.) the *Urine*, whose Stream, he fansies, resembles a silver Thred, which is then broken, when it distils by drops; as it frequently doth in Old men. But the best of the Hebrew Writers by this Cord understand the *Spinal Marrow* (that is, the Pith of the Back-bone) others the *Nerves*; others the outward *Coats* of the Nerves, *&c.* And there is little reason to doubt, but the Marrow down the Back, continued from the Brain, as it were, in a String or Cord, unto the very bottom of it; together with the Nerves arising from it; and the Filaments, Fibers and Tendons that proceed from them, are the thing here intended. Which *Melanthon* saw long ago: *the Nerves*, saith he, *and Ligaments are here meant*; which have literally the power of *Cords*, both to unite and tie together, and also draw. But no Body, that I know of, hath explained this so well as our Dr. *Smith* (in his Παγκοσμια Βασανος) who hath also solved that doubt, why they are expressed in the

Singular Number, becauſe, though there be many of them; yet, they are the continuation of one and the ſame thing (the *Fibers* being nothing elſe, but the Nerves divided and diſperſed; and the *Nerves* nothing elſe but the Marrow in like manner ſeparated, as ſo many Arms and Branches of the ſame Tree) they are all one in their *Original*, the Brain; they are all one in their *continuation*, for a long ſpace in the Spine; all one in their *uſe*, to convey the Animal Spirits, and to be the Inſtruments of motion.

This Cord is called *Silver*, becauſe of its colour; being not only white, but alſo ſhining bright and reſplendent; and that when it is taken out of the Body, after Death. I omit other Reaſons.

It is *looſned* (ſhrunk up, or contracted, or removed as others tranſlate it) when it is no longer full of Spirits: and ſo the Body becomes void of ſenſe and motion, either in part or in whole.

The ſecond ſtep to a diſſolution, is by breaking *the golden Bowl:* and as the former related to the Rivulets, as one may ſay, of ſenſe and motion; ſo this to the Fountain: *viz.* the Head, and all contained in it: The Membranes, for inſtance, eſpecially that which the Ancients, from the great eſteem and reverence they had for it, called *Pia Mater*. Which is that part which deeply inſinuating it ſelf, into all the anfractuous paſſages of the Brain (as Doctor *Smith* ſpeaks) and being firmly annexed thereunto, keeps every part thereof in its proper place, and due texture: ſo that whatſoever is performed within the whole compaſs of the Brain (whether the making Animal Spirits, their exerciſe therein, or their diſtribution therefrom) is principally done by the help of this Membrane. Which therefore may be called *gullath*; that part of the Head which is the *Spring* of all the motion that comes from thence. And ſo we tranſlate the Plural of this Word, XV. *Joſh.* 19. and both *Forſterus* and *Avenarius* underſtand the Singular here.

And it is called *golden* Bowl (like that IV. *Zathar.* 2, 3. from whence the Oil was conveyed by Pipes unto the Lamps) for ſuch Reaſons as gave the other the name of *ſilver* Cord. For inſtance, in reſpect of the colour; not only becauſe that moſt precious and deep-coloured Liquor of life, is abundantly contained in the Veſſels of this Membrane; but chiefly becauſe the Membrane it ſelf is ſomewhat of a yellowiſh colour; and tends more towards that of Gold, than any other part whatſoever doth. But eſpecially, in reſpect of its excellency and univerſal uſe: for it being the inſtrument that doth depurate the beſt of Blood, clarifies and exalts the Vital Spirits, and ſo prepares them for animality, (as they ſpeak) to what ſhould it be likened, but to that moſt perfect, beſt-concocted, and moſt exalted Mineral of Gold?

Now the *breaking* of this Bowl is its loſing its uſe; not being able to retain its Liquors; (as a Bowl is uſeleſs when it is broken) or as Dr. *Smith* explains it; in the extremity of extreme Old Age, it can no longer continue its continuity; but by reaſon either of its natural dryneſs, ſhriveling into it ſelf, or of preternatural moiſture, imbibing excrementitious humours, till it be over-full; it oft-times ſnaps aſunder, and ſo recurs (*i. e.* runs back, as the Hebrew Word ſignifies) into it ſelf; from whence the Brain muſt neceſſarily ſubſide, and all the Part ſerving unto Animal motion be ſuddenly and irrecoverably daſht in pieces. So *Avenarius* judiciouſly tranſlates this Paſſage, *That yellow Membrane which contains the Brain, be trodden down.*

The third ſtep is, the *breaking of the Pitcher at the Fountain.* Which is variouſly interpreted; ſome underſtanding hereby, the inability of the Bladder to retain the Urine, others by *Fountain* underſtand the *Liver*, and by the *Pitcher*, the Bladder of Gall; or the Veins; which is the moſt common Opinion. But Dr. *Smith* rather takes it for the *Heart:* which is indeed the *Fountain of Life*; and hath two diſtinct Cavities, the *right* and the *left:* out of which proceed thoſe *Veins* and thoſe *Arteries*; which carry the Blood through the whole Body, and bring it back again to the heart, in a perpetual circulation.

And if by *Pitcher* we underſtand the Veins, which are the *receptacle* of the Blood (and the Hebrew Word ſignifies any *containing Veſſel*, particularly the Widows *Barrel* in which was her Meal, 1 *Kings* XVII. 14, 16. as well as a *Barrel of Water* in the next Chapter XVIII. 33.) then by the *Fountain* muſt be peculiarly underſtood the *right Ventricle* of the heart; which is the Original from whence the Veins have their riſe. For ſo the Hebrew Word ſignifies, not only a *Fountain*, but a *Spring*; from which Waters bubble up and burſt forth (as we tranſlate it, XXXV. *Iſa.* 7. XLIX. 10.) in a running Stream: and therefore is ſo be tranſlated here, the *Spring* or *Original*, *viz.* of the Veins, which proceed from thence. Which induced Commentators to take the *Fountain* here for the Liver: which they would not have done, had they underſtood, as we do now, that the Veins do not ariſe from thence, as their firſt Orignal; but from the right Ventricle of the Heart. And they are ſpoken of in the Singular Number (as the Nerves were before) becauſe they are all of one and the ſame nature, original and uſe.

Now the *breaking* of this Pitcher into ſhivers (as the Hebrew Word ſignifies) is the utter failing of the Veins; their ceaſing quite from their natural action and uſe. When they can no longer carry back, nor conveniently convey unto the Heart that Liquor, which they properly contain: but the little Blood which remains in the cold Body of man, near his end is congealed, and ſtagnates in his Veins.

And ſo I proceed to the laſt thing, *the Wheel broken at the Ciſtern.* Where by the *Wheel* ſome underſtand the *Lungs*; which, by their continual motion, do thruſt out the Breath from them, and draw it in again to them: reſembling the *Wheel of a Well*, now drawing up the Bucket to it ſelf; anon letting it down again into the Well. *Melanchthon* by

Ciſtern

Ciſtern underſtanding the *Stomach* (the Word ſignifying, ſaith he, a profound Cavity) takes the *Wheel* for the *Guts* adjoining thereunto: which are wrapt about one another, in a kind of Circular form; and make the *Meſentery* look like a Wheel. Which *Grotius* ſeems alſo to have had in his mind. But, taking it for granted that a *Wheel*, being an Inſtrument of Circulation, is the Hieroglyphick of ſomething that goes, and makes a round in us, I think Dr. *Smith*'s conjecture is moſt probable; that hereby is meant the great Artery, with all its Branches: which is the great inſtrument of rotation or circulation in the Body of man; and ſo evidently thruſts the Blood forward, that we perceive its Pulſes, forcing the Blood along its Cavity, in the Wriſts, the Temples, and other Parts of the Body. Without which Inſtrument to compel it, the Blood that naturally tends home to the Heart, would go no farther.

And then the *Ciſtern* from whence this Wheel forces the Liquor, and conveys it through all the Parts, is the *left Ventricle of the Heart*: to which this great Artery is annexed, and from whence it ariſeth. For a *Ciſtern* is a Veſſel made on purpoſe to receive a due proportion of Water, and to keep it till the time of uſe; and then conveniently to paſs it into Veſſels that are prepared to receive it from thence. And ſuch is the left Ventricle of the Heart; which in its *Diaſtole*, as they call it, receives the Blood that is brought into it from the Lungs: and then, keeping it there a little, doth in its *Syſtole* paſs due proportions thereof, into the great Artery, to be diſpenſed as was ſaid before. And, for this end, there are little Valves or falling doors placed, at the entrance and at the going out of this Ciſtern; which are like Cocks to let in, and to let out; and, by their opening or ſhutting, give convenient paſſage, or ſtoppage to the Liquor; which continually runs that way.

And ſo the *breaking* or *ſhaking in pieces* (as *Forſterus* tranſlates the Word) of this Wheel, is the ceaſing of the Pulſe, ſo he in another place tranſlates it, *trodden down*, i. e. *ſuppreſſed* by the decay of the Inſtruments of Pulſations; which can no longer perform that work. Which being abſolutely neceſſary for the preſervation of life, the ceaſing of it is death.

[g] *V.* 7.] And ſo the *Body*, made of a mouldering ſubſtance, being no longer a fit habitation for the Spirit (and therefore deſerted by it) which held the parts of it together, ſhall crumble again into the Earth, out of which it originally came: according to that Sentence paſſed upon *Adam* in the beginning, *Duſt thou art and unto duſt ſhalt thou return*, III. *Gen.* 19. This Body was no better in its firſt Principles: and though now we are very fond of it, as if it were ſome goodly thing; yet, when the Spirit leaves it, it will appear to be indeed but *Duſt*.

But the *Spirit*, the nobler part of man, being of an higher Original, ſhall return to God, who ſent it into the Body; to be diſpoſed of by Him, according to the Sentence that he ſhould paſs upon it. For the *Chaldee Paraphraſe*'s Explication of the latter part of this Verſe is very appoſite, *It ſhall return, that it may ſtand in judgment before God.* For *Elohim* (the Word here for *God*) in the Hebrew Language ſignifies a *Judge*. As in the place abovementioned, 1 *Sam.* XXVIII. 9. There is a Sentence not much unlike to this, I have obſerved in *Plutarch*'s Conſolatory Diſcourſe to *Apollonius* upon the Death of his Son: where he alledges, amongſt a great many other, this Saying of *Epicharmus*, Σωματείῳ ἐξ ἀρχείου, ἐξ οὗπερ ἦλθε πάλιν, γᾶ μὲν εἰς γᾶν, πνεῦμα δ' ἄνω.

[h] *V.* 8.] And now, having thus demonſtrated his firſt Propoſition, he elegantly repeats the *Exordium* or entrance of his Book, as is here obſerved by St. *Hierom*, whoſe Words are ſo ſignificant, that I cannot but tranſlate them; as an excellent Gloſs upon this Verſe: *For ſince all the labour of mortal man* (*of which* Solomon *hath diſputed in this whole Book*) *amounts to this, That the Duſt returns to its Earth, and the Soul returns thither from whence it was taken: it is an exceſs of vanity to labour for this world; and to gather nothing for the future*: where he is to live for ever, and to be judged according to his behaviour here.

This only may be added, That here he enters upon the Concluſion of his Diſcourſe; and divides it into *two* Parts, as he had done the foregoing Book. *Firſt*, he ſumms up what he had ſaid in the *ſix* firſt Chapters, concerning the *falſe ways* men take to happineſs, in this Verſe: which he backs by ſeveral ſerious Conſiderations, in thoſe that follow, unto Verſe 13. Where, *ſecondly*, he ſumms up what he had ſaid from Chap. VII. to this place, concerning the *true way* to happineſs; which lies only in a due regard to God and his Commandments.

[i] *V.* 9.] The firſt Word of this Verſe is variouſly tranſlated: and the whole Verſe applied by Interpreters, either to confirm what was ſaid before concerning the falſe methods men take to happineſs (as if he had ſaid, I have done when I have told you, that you may believe me; who am ſufficiently able to inform you, and not think to meet with better information, from other mens Writings, or from your own experience) or as an introduction to what he intends to ſay, *ver.* 13, 14. concerning the right method to be happy. Which he prepares the Reader to attend unto, and receive into his mind: firſt, by aſſerting his own great Authority in this Verſe (who the wiſer he was, the more deſirous he was both to teach, and to learn.) And then, the weighty Doctrine which he taught, *v.* 10. And the great uſefulneſs of it, *v.* 11. The like to which they would find no where elſe, *v.* 12. It is not very material which of theſe ways we take; but I have had reſpect to both, in my Paraphraſe: where I have expreſſed the ſenſe ſo fully, that I cannot think fit to enlarge any farther upon this Verſe. But only note, that *Luther*, and he alone, I think, expounds the firſt Words thus (not abſurdly, nor diſagreeing with the Hebrew Text) *There remained nothing to the Preacher, but that he was wiſe*, &c. He underſtood and taught aright, and took a great deal of pains; which

was

was a great ſatisfaction to himſelf, but he ſaw little or no ſucceſs of it in others, who would not be governed by his Advice, &c.

[k] *V.* 10. This Verſe runs thus, word for word, in the Hebrew, *The Preacher carefully ſought to meet with deſirable words; and the writing of uprightneſs; and the words of truth.* Where *writing* may refer both to what he read in others, whether Divine or Humane Authors; and to what he wrote himſelf (and ſo I have expounded it in the Paraphraſe) which he commends from three Heads, *pleaſure*, or delight; *uſefulneſs*, and *certainty*.

Some fanſie that *Solomon* wrote a Book called *Catub Jaſcher* (the Writing of Uprightneſs) or *Jaſcher dibre emeth* (the upright Words of Truth) of which, as there is no certainty, ſo I ſee no probable grounds to aſſert it. Only we know he wrote a great many more Books than we have, 1 *Kings* IV. 32, 33. 2 *Chron.* XXXV. 4. And ſee *Joſephus*, L. VIII. Antiq. C. 2.

[l] *V.* 11. Some connect this with the foregoing Verſe in this manner, *The Preacher ſought to find out the words of the Wiſe*, &c. And ſo the Words run exactly in the Hebrew. But we may take this Verſe by it ſelf, ſupplying the Word *are*, as we do in our Tranſlation; and look upon it as a commendation of theſe wiſe Words: which doth not in the leaſt alter the ſenſe. I have had reſpect to both; and comprehended alſo, in my Paraphraſe, two of the Interpretations which one difficult Phraſe is capable of, viz. *Maſters of the Aſſemblies.*

Which may be tranſlated divers ways, more literally out of the Hebrew than we do; who add the Word *by* before them, which is not in the Original. For the laſt Words, which we tranſlate *Maſters of Aſſemblies*, may be attributed to *Nails*, in this manner: *As Nails faſtned, whereby things are joined together*, (*Nails* being the Inſtruments of gathering or bringing thoſe things together, which were ſeparate) or thus, retaining the Words of our Tranſlation, *the Maſters of Aſſemblies are as fixed Nails*: or the *Maſters of Collections*, ſuch judicious Authors as make excellent Collections of Apophthegms and ſmart Sayings, *Stick in the Mind as Nails do in Planks.* Or the *principal*, the choice *Collections* (*viz.* of Wiſe men, mentioned in the beginning of the Verſe) *are as*, &c. or it may, in the ſame ſenſe, be connected (not with Nails, but) with the Words following: the *Maſters* or *Authors that collect wiſe and pithy Sayings, have their Gifts from one and the ſame Shepherd.*

So ungrounded is the fancy of *Grotius*; who from hence conjectures, that there were ſeveral perſons appointed by *Zerobabel* (whom he takes for this *one Paſtor*) to collect the Sentences of this Book, and put them out under the name of *Solomon.* Who himſelf may rather be thought to be this *one Paſtor* or *King*: who employed (if we interpret the Words this way) many perſons to make Collections: of which he afterwards made uſe as he ſaw cauſe.

This ſeems to be certain, that he here gives the the reaſon of this conciſe and ſententious way of Writing: becauſe ſuch acute Sayings, not only ſtir up and quicken ſlothful minds for the preſent (as a Goad ſtimulates the dull Ox to labour) but penetrate deep and ſtick faſt in the memory; collecting alſo the thoughts, affections and reſolutions, to one certain Point or Scope; and gathering together a great deal of ſenſe into a few Words. As thoſe Words *baale aſſyppoth*, Maſters of Aſſemblies, or Authors of Collections may, I have ſometimes thought, be underſtood. Such a Collector was that Great Man *Julius Cæſar*; who gathered a Book of Apophthegms; and ſhewed by that, he thought it more honourable unto him, if he changed himſelf, as it were, into *Tables* and *Codicils*, in which the prudent and grave Sayings of others were regiſtred; than to have his own Words hallowed like Oracles, as ſome vain Princes, corrupted by flattery, have affected. Though divers of his own Speeches, as the Lord *Bacon* obſerves, (L. I. *de Augm. Scient.* C. 7.) are truly ſuch as thoſe which *Solomon* here deſcribes, full of vigour and efficacy: inſomuch, that by one word alone he appeaſed a mutiny in his Army.

But, after all that may be ſaid on this Subject, ſince I find not only the *Vulgar*, but the LXX making out the ſenſe by adding the word *per* and ἀπὸ (as we do the Word *by* in our Tranſlation) before *Maſters of Aſſembles*; I have in the Paraphraſe followed that Interpretation alſo.

[m] *V.* 12. And in this Verſe have adhered to the ſame Tranſlation, which underſtands the firſt Words, as if he had ſaid: Beyond theſe things do not trouble thy ſelf. For ſo they may be tranſlated exactly, *and what is above, or more than them* (that is, *the words of the wiſe*, beforementioned) *my Son, be warned, or be enlightned:* obſerve theſe well, and trouble thy ſelf no further. Be content with a few good Precepts of the Wiſe; and do not involve thy ſelf in many Books. For what is neceſſary may be learnt without much labour, out of a ſhort Book: if men will be wiſer than they need they will but trouble themſelves to no purpoſe. There being no certainty of moſt things: no ſatisfaction when we go beyond the known and acknowledged Principle, and Precepts of Vertue: but what one man aſſerts, another confutes; and when we think we have written excellently, another Writer ſtarts up and diſcovers abundance of errors: and ſo Volumes are multiplied without end: and we are led into long diſquiſitions, without any ſatisfaction to the mind, but with much wearineſs to the Body, and great loſs of precious time; which had better be ſpent in digeſting and practiſing ſuch ſhort, uſeful, and neceſſary Inſtructions as theſe.

He doth not abſolutely condemn many Books, for there are not a few of the Divine Writings; and about the ſame thing: but Books about needleſs things; and that dilate too much upon things neceſſary; rather tiring, than inſtructing. And he condemns the levity of thoſe that are always reading, but never meditating:

ditating: running over such a Book as this presently, and then going to another, not so profitable; and never returning to this again.

So I take it in short, *Content thy self with this Book, and such like; and do not turn over many Authors, to learn how to be happy.* For goodness and truth are included in certain Bounds; but wickedness and lyes, *sine fine sunt*, are without end, as St. *Hierom* here notes. Who observes also, that perhaps he adviseth us, to study brevity; and to mind the sense more than the words: directly contrary to the Philosophers and Doctors of the World, who to assert their false Opinions, use abundance and great variety of Words; but the Divine Scripture, *brevi Circulo coarctata est*, is confined to a small Circle; and as much contracted in Words, as it is dilated in sense.

The Hebrew Word *bahag*, which we translate *study*, *Aben Ezra* says, in the neighbouring Languages, signifies reading; and so we translate it in the Margin.

[n] *V.* 13.] To teach us to contract our labours into as small a compass as we can, he summs up, in a few Words, the sense of his whole Discourse in this Book; which he calls *the conclusion or end of the matter*; of all that can be said on this Subject: the whole sense of the Sermon, succinctly delivered; unto which therefore every one should confine his endeavours. It is this, to work his Soul unto such a due regard of the Divine Majesty (standing in awe of him as his Lord, Overseer, and Judge) that he take care to observe all his Commandments: without which all Religion is vain and fruitless.

And these two things (the *fear of God* (or devotion) and *obedience*) he commends from *two* Arguments: The *first* of which is in this Verse; that they are things which concern all Mankind, one as well as another; of which if they be careful, they have done enough to make themselves immortally happy.

For those words, *this is the whole*, or *the all of man*, may be expounded four several ways: either this is *all the duty of man*, or the *duty of all men*; or the *whole happiness of all men*; or *their whole business*; unto which therefore they should devote their *whole selves*; that is, all their strength. For, according as St. *Hierom* understands it, *to this man was born: that he understanding God is his Creator should worship him with fear, and honour, and observance of his Commands.*

And the *fear of God* being implanted in our minds, we shall not fail to worship Him, and call upon Him, and expect all good things from Him, and give Him thanks for them: And, as the best expression of our thankfulness, *keep his Commandments*, and be obedient to all his Precepts: both in subduing our sinful Appetites and Passions, and in exercising Charity towards our Neighbours. Which will make us true in word and deed; faithful in all our Contracts; liberal to the Poor; observant of our Governors; in short, make us observe all the directions of this Book, in order to our happiness.

[o] *V.* 14.] Here is the *second* Argument, why we should seriously intend these things; because the Lord and Judge of the World, will one day call us to an account for what we do here; and pass an impartial Sentence upon every action of our Life, even *against every Secret* (as some expound these words *al col alam*) or upon all secret as well as open Actions. Which are all known to Him, tho' now He seem to take no notice of them; and shall then not only be brought to light, but with an apparent distinction between good and evil: the difference of which, shall be certainly and notoriously manifested; by the severe punishment of the one, and the bountiful remuneration of the other.

I will imitate therefore (saith *Melanthon*) the example of *Solomon*; and, in the Conclusion, recite the summ of this Book. "He intended to assert "divine Providence; and to refute the Objecti- "ons against it: which are these; There are "great confusions in humane life; a vast multi- "tude of ungodly men, and but few that ac- "knowledge and fear God: and, which is worse, "the wicked flourish in honour and riches; but "the pious are afflicted, and oft-times killed "by the worst of men, *&c.* therefore all things "seem to be carried by Chance. Unto which "*Solomon* answers; Tho' for the most part, "such be the confusion of things, yet be thou "ruled by God's Word; and hold the Opini- "on of his Providence with a firm Faith. Do "not fall from God, because of these Scandals; "nor cast away his fear, or thy confidence in "Him; nor desert thy vocation: but oppose "these *two* things to these confusions; There "will come a Judgment, when God will take "away these confusions and make an exact "distinction: for the wicked shall be thrown "into everlasting punishment; but it shall "be well for ever with the righteous. And "in this life also, God moderates these con- "fusions: for he punishes heinous wicked- "ness; supports Government, preserves Go- "vernours, and Order, and Polities in the "World. Nay, this is a testimony of God's "presence, that when the infirmity of human "Nature is so great, and so many are no bet- "ter than mad and furious; yet God preserves "his Church." And, I may add, we have such good Books as these for our direction into Truth, and encouragement in Piety.

THE END.



THE

Song of Solomon

Paraphraſed. With Annotations.

The PREFACE.

THAT this Book was compoſed by SOLOMON is no more doubted, than that he was the Author of the two foregoing.

And that it was always lookt upon as an Holy Book, treating of ſome Spiritual and Divine matter, appears from its being placed among the reſt of that kind. Nor hath it been doubted of by any conſiderable number of men, either among Jews or Chriſtians, but only by a few ſingular perſons; who ought (as Theodoret ſpeaks in his Preface to this Book) to have lookt upon thoſe bleſſed Fathers, who placing this Song among the Divine Writings, took it to be fit for the uſes of the Church, as men of greater judgment, and more ſpiritual than themſelves. And they ought likewiſe to have conſidered (as he adds) that we have, in effect, the teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt it ſelf, for its Divine Authority: Ezra, a man excelling in Virtue and full of the Holy Spirit, having thought this worthy of a room among thoſe Sacred Volumes, which he gathered together after their return from the Captivity of Babylon.

And accordingly, a great many holy men have illuſtrated it (as he farther notes) with their Commentaries and Interpretations, or have adorned their Writings with its Sentences: ſuch as Euſebius, Origen, Cyprian, (who wore the Crown of Martyrdom) καὶ οἱ τότε παλαιότεροι καὶ πρὸ ἐκείνων ἀνδρες; and others that were more ancient than theſe, and nearer to the times of the Apoſtles.

It is unneceſſary to mention thoſe that followed after in future times, who all took this for a ſpiritual Book: let us only conſider, whether theſe things being ſo, it be reaſonable for us, to diſpiſe ſo many and ſuch great perſons, nay, the Holy Spirit it ſelf, and to follow our own private Opinions; nor hearkning to him that ſaid, The thoughts of mortal man are vain, and our devices are but uncertain, IX. Wiſd. 14. or rather of St. Paul, I. Rom. 21. They became vain in their imagination, and their fooliſh heart was darkned.

II. Nor doth it ſeem hard, either to find out what that ſpiritual matter is, of which the Wiſe man here treats (eſpecially, ſince all Chriſtian Writers have from the beginning applied this Song to Chriſt

Chriſt *and the* Church) *or to give an account of the Riſe and Original of ſuch ſublime contemplations: which I take to be this.*

The great Prophet David *having plainly foretold what a far more glorious King than his Son* Solomon, *ſhould one day ariſe (as we read in the Song he made at his Marriage,* Pſal. XLV.) *and likewiſe more expreſly propheſied of his Divinity, Royal Majeſty, Prieſthood, &c.* (Pſal. CX.) *and again reſumed this Argument, juſt before his death, when he cauſed his Son* Solomon *to be crowned and to ſit upon his Throne* (Pſal. LXXII.) *it ſtirred up the longing deſires of* Solomon *after the coming of this moſt illuſtrious Prince; and made him ſtudy to have, at leaſt, as clear a ſight of Him, as was poſſible to be attained afar off. And that he might ſtir up the ſame deſire in the whole Nation, after his appearing; he caſt his Meditations on this Subject into a Song, in the form of a* Paſtoral Eclogue: *In which ſeveral Perſons being introduced who ſpeak their Parts, it may be called a* Dramatick Poem. *And ſo it is ſtiled by S.* Greg. Nazianzen, *in his XXXI. Oration: where he quotes a paſſage, ἐκ τοῦ ἐπιθαλαμίου ᾄσματος (as his Words are *) out of this Bridal Interlude and Song. For a* Drama, *as the Greeks teach us, conſiſts in the change of Perſons, ſome of which enter; others come to them; others withdraw; till the whole Work be compleated, by this ſhifting and alteration of the Perſons.*

* P. 503. Edit. Pariſ.

Now the Perſons which compoſe this Song, are the Bridegroom, *the* Bride, *the* Virgins *attending on her, and the* Youths *attending on him; to whom ſome add the* Siſter *of the Spouſe mentioned Chap. VIII; and the* Watchmen *and* Daughters of Jeruſalem, *who are introduced in their turns. For example, firſt, the Bride, and her Companions, comes in and ſaith,* Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth, *&c. Then the Bridegroom appears, and ſaith, v.* 8. If thou knoweſt not, O thou faireſt, *&c. After which he ſeems to withdraw himſelf, leaving the Bride and her Companions alone upon the Stage (while he ſits at his repaſt, v.* 12.) *who thus ſpeaks to her,* We will make thee Borders of Gold, *&c. And then ſhe ſpeaks again, v.* 13. *and he returns and ſpeaks, v.* 15.

How many Parts there are in this Drama, *is not agreed. Some make* ten; *others make but* ſeven Colloquies, *or interlocutory paſſages, in this ſacred* Dialogue, *as they call it. About which I do not think fit to diſpute; but ſhall take notice of as many as I can obſerve, in the* Argument *or* Annotations *upon each Chapter.*

As for the Phraſe, it is wholly Allegorical, in expreſſions borrowed chiefly from the Fields, and Woods, and Gardens: as I ſhall ſhow in their proper places, when we meet with them. And ſuch were the fitteſt that could be found, ſuppoſing he would uſe Poetical Words, to ſet forth the ardent deſire he had, and would excite in others (as I ſaid before) to have a ſight of that great Shepherd *of the Sheep, who would make all the World happy.*

III. *And none need wonder that he ſpeaks* wholly *of this glorious King; for ſo doth his Father* David *in the* CX^th^ Pſalm, *which can be applied to no other Perſon whatſoever; and ſo doth the Prophet* Iſaiah *in after times, in his LIII Chapter. Which though ſome have endaevoured to accommodate firſt to another perſon, yet they have failed in their attempt; and never could find any in whom it was ſo literally fulfilled as in our Bleſſed Saviour. Who alone was there intended; as He ſeems to me to be here alſo, in this preſent Song of* Solomon's.

Where it need not ſeem ſtrange neither to any one, that he is compared to a Bridegroom, *and the Church to a* Bride, *who doth but reflect upon the XLV Pſalm; and obſerve how* Solomon *doth only follow the Metaphor, wherein his Father* David *had repreſented this Myſtery: and obſerve withal, that it is the common Language of the Prophets, who compare* Jeruſalem *and* Zion *(under which names is comprehended the whole Church of the Jews) to a Virgin, called frequently* the Virgin-Daughter of Sion, *&c. whom God had eſpouſed unto himſelf.*

IV. *But, for the fuller Explication of this, it may be fit to note, that the profoundeſt of the Hebrew Divines, whom they now call* Cabbaliſts, *having ſuch a Notion as this among them, that* ſenſible things are but an imitation of things above, *conceived from thence, that there was (for inſtance) an Original pattern of that love and union, which is between a Man and his Wife here in this World. This they expreſſed by the kindneſs of* Tipheret *to* Malcuth: *which are the Names they give unto the inviſible Bridegroom and Bride in the upper World. And this* Tipheret (*i. e.* Beauty *or* Ornament) *they call alſo by the Name of the* Adam on high, *and the* Great Adam, *in oppoſition to the* terreſtial *or* little Adam *here below. As* Malcuth (*i. e. Kingdom*) *they call alſo by the name of* Cheneſeth Iſrael, *i. e. Congregation of* Iſrael; *who is united, they ſay, to that* Celeſtial Adam *as* Eve *was to the* terreſtial. *Which heavenly* Adam *or* Tipheret *they call likewiſe the* Sun, *and* Malcuth *the Moon: and make the former an active Principle, the latter a paſſive; or as their Phraſe is,* Tipheret *is but the Maſculine power which influences* Malcuth; *who is but the recipient of thoſe influences. So that, in ſumm, they ſeem to ſay the ſame that the Apoſtle St.* Paul *doth, when he tells us, that* Marriage is a great Myſtery; but he ſpeaks concerning Chriſt and his Church, V. Epheſ. 32. *For the Marriage of* Tipheret *and* Malcuth (*or* Cheneſeth Iſrael) *is the Marriage of Chriſt, the Lord, from Heaven, with his Spouſe the Church, which is the whole Congregation of Chriſtian people. Which was repreſented in the conjunction of* Adam *and* Eve, *and of all other men and women deſcended from them, when they are joined together in holy Matrimony; inſomuch that thoſe Divines, called* Cabbaliſts, *have formed this Maxim about this matter; that* whereſoever in the holy Scripture we read the love of Man and Wife, there is myſtically deſigned the conjunction of *Tipheret* and *Cheneſeth Iſrael.*

Now this Notion (of which the Learned Dr. Cudworth *hath long ago wrote a peculiar Diſcourſe, was ſo ancient among thoſe Doctors, that they had it before the times of Chriſt; it gives the plaineſt account, why* John *the* Baptiſt *uſes the word* Chriſt *and* Bridegroom, *as if they were in a manner ſynonimous, and of the ſame import,* III. Joh. 28, 29. *and why Chriſt himſelf compares the whole buſineſs of his heavenly Kingdom (called by the people in St.* Mark XI. 10. the Kingdom of our Father David) *to a* Marriage, *or* Marriage-feaſt, *which a King made for his Son,* Matth. XXII. 2. *&c.*

V. *And*

V. *And this is one Argument of its being a very ancient Notion among them, that Idolatry and false Worship in the Church, is constantly expressed in the Scriptures, under the name of spiritual* fornication, *and* going a whoring *from God; whom therefore the Church was to look upon as her Husband. And so he taught the Children of* Israel *to do, by using this form of Speech throughout the whole Prophetical Writings,* LIV. Isa. 5. LXII. 4, 5. III. Jerem. 4. 20. XXXI. 32. II. Hosea 2, 7. *and many other places. Nay, the very Words of the Apostle to the* Ephesians, *seem to suppose some such mystical sense, which was current in that Nation, of those Words of* Adam *the first man,* II. Gen. 23, 24. This now is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, *&c.* therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh. *Which the Apostle takes, as if they had been spoken of Christ, and his love to his Church, as any one may see that will read* V. Ephes. 29, 30, 31, 32. *For these are not in the count of the* Cabbalists, *two distinct senses: but one and the same sense, different only as the matter and the form of the same thing: which form, say they, lies latent under the matter, whereby we are led unto it, as the main thing comprehended in it.*

Thus Archangelus Burgonovensis *speaks, in his Preface to the Explication of some select Aphorisms of those Divines,* gathered by Mirandula, *who observes also (p. 91. of his Book that as immediately after the Fabrick of the World was reared, Matrimony followed, as the Emblem of God's great love to those that should believe on Him; so this World shall end in the Sacrament of Marriage: St.* John *shutting up all the Mysteries of the holy Scripture in the* Revelation, *with these Words,* Let us be glad and rejoyce, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready, XIX. Rev. 7. *Which if it be the voice of the heavenly Host, agrees with what the Hebrew Doctors say, (in* Perke Elieser, *Cap.* 12.) *of the Marriage of* Adam *and* Eve: *that the* Angels rejoyced at it, and with musick and dancing attended upon the Wedding.

VI. *All which things put together show how naturally the thoughts of* David *were led, as* Solomon's *Marriage, to sing concerning Christ and his Church; and the thoughts of* Solomon *afterward to sing more largely of the wonderful love of the same heavenly Bridegroom, in this* Song of Songs; *that is, most excellent Song. For so it may be truly called both in regard of its Subject-matter; and in regard of the manner of its composure: this parabolical way of writing, by Figures and Similitudes, being in many regards (as the forenamed* Cabbalistical *Doctors Discourse) the best of all others.* First, *because it is taken from things sensible, by which both learned men and ignorant may be instructed.* Secondly, *because such Narrations very easily imprint themselves on the mind: a Parable (say they) being instead of an artificial Memory.* And thirdly, *because all our knowledge hath its rise from sense, and therefore symbolizes much with sensible Parables.* And fourthly, *it is very delightful to contemplate how the Parable agrees with the spiritual things, which are thereby figured. Unto which (saith that* Archangelus *beforementioned) the Doctrine of St.* Paul *is conformable, when he saith,* The invisible things of God from the creation of the World, are seen by those that are made. *And,* lastly, *what is there more evident, than that all visible things declare God to be love? whose praise* Solomon *celebrates in this Song. For by love, as the same Author discourses out of* Boetius *and others) the Heavens are joined together, and the Elements agree in composition, Animals cohabit, Cities are preserved, and all Kingdoms supported and replenished. Which made* Pherecydes Syrus *say, that God was transformed into love, before He made the World. And because God created all things in love, he all embraces all things with the same love; and would have us to love; which is the summ of all that He exacts of us: that being knit together by mutual love, we may in conclusion be united with Him in love; that so all things may be one, as they were in the beginning.*

Of this love, Solomon, *say they, treats throughout this whole Song; nay, it is the Subject of all the Book of God. According to that of* David, LXII. Psal. 11, 12. God hath spoken once, viz. *to the whole People of* Israel, *when he gave the Law at Mount* Sinai; *yea,* twice I have heard this, *from the Prophets, that is, who say the same with the Law,* that power belongeth to God, also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou rendereſt to every man according to his work. *Which they expound in this manner, Thou canst send good or evil influences upon us; by the union of* Tipheret *and* Malcuth, *a good influence; by their separation, a bad. For when* Israel *doth well, then it receives good influences from above; that is, from* Tipheret: *for* such is the order (*says one of their Aphorisms*) which is constituted in the Archetypal World, that all good influences proceed from Tipheret. *And then these two Principles are united, when we observe God's Precepts; but when we transgress the Law, the one is separated from the other; that is,* Tipheret *doth not send influences upon* Malcuth *for our good: but another Principle interposes and sends anxiety and trouble. Now Love is the union of these two Principles: the love of Man and Wife signifying in Scripture the Union of* Israel *and* Tipheret: *which Union* Hosea *speaks of, when he saith,* II. 19, 20. I will betroth me unto thee for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousneſs, and in judgment, and in loving kindneſs, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulneſs, and thou shalt know the Lord.

Thus that sort of Divines discourse; very agreeably to the sense of this Book. Which represents the Heavenly Bridegroom, *appearing in the greatest* Beauty; *and sometimes in most familiar communication with his Spouse the Church: but at other times withdrawing his glorious presence, and absenting himself from her. Who is represented therefore after the same manner, like to the moon, (unto which they compare* Malcuth) *sometimes full of his heavenly light, sometimes illuminated only in part, and sometimes obscure and dark. Which will appear more at large, in the Explication of the several parts of this Book.*

VII. *The time of whose writing cannot be certainly known: but it is very probable, but it was not long after* Solomon *was seated on his Throne: and had both the Prophecy of his Father* David *fresh in his mind; and was also strongly affected with the wonderful love of God to himself. He being filled then likewise with incomparable Wisdom*

from above; such Wisdom that it brought the Queen of Sheba *to discourse with him, having* heard the fame of Solomon, becauſe of the name of the Lord, 1 *Kings* X. 1. *that is, as ſome of the Hebrews expound it, becauſe ſhe underſtood that the Wiſdom which was in him, was not merely natural, like that of the Philoſophers and Eaſtern Sages, but Divine and Heavenly, by a ſpecial inſpiration from above: whereby he was inabled to anſwer the hardeſt Queſtions.*

At that time, when theſe Celeſtial Gifts were newly poured into him (which the Cabbaliſts *call the* Unction of the Holy Ghoſt; *or the* Sacred Name, *of which* Solomon *ſpeaks, ſay they, when he ſays, in the beginning of this Song,* Thy Name is as an Ointment poured out) *we may well conceive his mind ſhined in its greateſt purity and clearneſs: and, enjoying the ſweeteſt and moſt perfect peace and tranquility, was the fitter for ſuch Divine Meditations as theſe, which are the Subject of this Holy Book. The ſenſe of which ſeems to be expreſſed in the* 2 Corinth. XI. 2. *Where St.* Paul (*who was not* rude in knowledge, *v. 6. but mightily verſed, as that Word* knowledge *ſignifies, in the Myſteries of the Old Teſtament*) *puts the Church of* Corinth *in mind of his ſolicitous concern for them in theſe words,* I have eſpouſed you to one Huſband, that I may preſent you as a chaſt Virgin unto Chriſt. *For of that* one Husband *alone; and of that* pure Virgin *and no other; and of their* eſpouſals, love *and* union, *is this incomparable Song of* Solomon's *to be underſtood, and expounded.*

A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

SONG of *SOLOMON.*

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

There are four principal parts of this Chapter: Firſt, the Bride comes in expreſſing the deſire of all Iſrael, *nay, of all Nations, to ſee the* Meſſiah. *Who, next of all, is brought in* (*v.* 8.) *teſtifying his love to all thoſe that ſeek after him. And then* (*all her Attendants having, with one voice, made a noble reſolution, not to be unworthy of ſuch love, v.* 11.) *She ſpeaks again, and declares her marvellous ſatisfaction in the knowledge and love of Him,* v. 12. *Which is the third part. And laſtly, they both conclude with mutual gratulations and praiſes,* v. 15, 16, *and, accompanied with the ſymphony of all their Attendants,* v. 17. *commend the excellency of their habitation.*

Verſe 1. THE *ſong of ſongs, which* is *Solomons.*] The moſt excellent of all the Songs that *Solomon* (or any other perſon) ever compoſed: repreſenting the ardent deſire which was in him, and which he endeavoured to excite in all the people, to enjoy that great bleſſing of the Meſſiah. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 2. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth: for thy love* is *better than wine.*] With the thoughts of whom his mind being wholly poſſeſſed, he burſt forth into this moſt paſſionate ſtrain of affection to Him, ſaying, in the name of them all, O that he would come and ſpeak to us by himſelf, and not merely by his Prophets; who have told us ſo much of Him, that I cannot but wiſh to converſe familiarly with him, and receive the words of his own mouth (thoſe words of Grace, XLV. *Pſal.* 2. which will raviſh all mens hearts) and all other expreſſions of his incomparable love: Which is to be preferred infinitely before the moſt delicious pleaſures, that this good Land wherein we live affords: yea, before the very Sacrifices, and the Wine that is poured out upon the Altar unto God. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name* is as *ointment powred forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.*] By whom Thou art ſo highly exalted, far above all other Kings and Prophets; and the fame which is already ſpread of Thee (XLV. Pſal. 8, 9.) and of the knowledge which Thou ſhalt impart unto the World, is ſo ſweet, ſo grateful and delicious, that for this cauſe all truly pious and holy ſouls (XLV. Pſal. 14.) are in love with thee, and long to ſee thee. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee: the King hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.*] Appear then in thy Power, Majeſty and Glory, and by thy mighty Grace and Love attract me and all my people to thee: which will make the whole World moſt readily and cheerfully devote themſelves unto thy ſervice. And, methinks, I behold this King in his Royal ſplendor, as if He were already come; nay, He hath made me underſtand the ſecret Myſteries of his

King-

Kingdom; which give me a taſte of that great joy, wherewith we have been told (XLV. Pſal. 15.) all Mankind ſhall enter into thy Society: And it is but reaſon that we ſhould all reſolve with the higheſt ſatisfaction of mind to rejoice and triumph in thee, and never to think of thy love, and the bleſſings we expect from thence, but with a pleaſure beyond all other: and the better judgment any men have, and the more upright-hearted they are, the more perfectly will they love thee and thy unſpotted righteouſneſs. *See* Annot. [d].

Ver. 5. *I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the Curtains of Solomon.*] And do not take offence, O ye Daughters of *Jeruſalem*, at his kind reception of all Nations into his Kingdom, but hear their Anſwer to you, when you upbraid them with Idolatry, and all manner of impurity: which is the ſame with that of a lovely Shepherdeſs, when tann'd by lying much abroad in the Fields. My complexion indeed is dark and ſwarthy; but my features and proportions are comely and beautiful: though I ſeem as ruſtick as the Skins of the Tents, wherein the wild Arabs dwell; yet I am as amiable as the fine Linen, which makes the Curtains of the Apartment of King *Solomon*. *See* Annot. [e].

Ver. 6. *Look not upon me becauſe I am black, becauſe the ſun hath looked upon me: my mothers children were angry with me, they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept.*] Do not deſpiſe me therefore, by conſidering only my outward hue, though it be exceeding black; ſince it is not naturally ſo, but contracted by being expoſed to the Sun: for my Brethren and Siſters, who ſhould have been more kind, did me the greateſt injury, and made me a Slave to the meaneſt employments, in which I could not preſerve my beauty; becauſe I was like one that being ſet to keep other mens Vineyards could not look after his own.

(Which is a lively Emblem of the Gentiles, who are deſcended from the ſame parents with your ſelves, and though by worſhipping the Sun, and by other Idolatries, they are become odiouſly polluted; yet, ſhall be cleanſed by becoming the Subjects of Chriſt: who will pity them, as ſeduced by falſe Teachers, and neglected by you; which made them embrace any Religion, rather than the true.) *See* Annot. [f].

Ver. 7. *Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at noon: for why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions?*] But let us all join together, profeſſing our moſt hearty affection to Him, and beſeech Him with one voice, ſaying, O Thou whom I love above all things, inſtruct me in thy heavenly Doctrine, and make me to underſtand, not only where we may learn thy will, but alſo enjoy thy true Religion in quiet and peace: For we are weary of wandring uncertainly after thoſe who pretend to thy Spirit, but miſlead ſuch as are guided by them. *See* Annot. [g].

Bridegroom.

Ver. 8. ¶ *If thou know not, O thou faireſt among women, go thy way forth by the foot-ſteps of the flock, and feed the kids beſide the ſhepherds tents.*] Unto which his Anſwer is, Thy deſire of true knowledge hath already made thee moſt amiable in my eyes (XLV. Pſal. 11.) and therefore what thou underſtandeſt not I will teach thee. Forſake thoſe vain Religions XLV. Pſal. 10.) by which thou haſt been deluded, and enter into the holy Aſſemblies of thoſe pious Souls that worſhip me: and bring thy young Converts, to be inſtructed by thoſe Paſtors, whom I will authorize in my Church. *See* Annot. [h].

Ver. 9. *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horſes in Pharaohs chariots.*] Where they ſhall grow in ſtrength, and increaſe in number; and under the Conduct of thoſe great Men, who ſhall guide and lead them, ſpeedily ſubdue all Mankind unto my obedience (XLV. Pſal. 4.) for I have liken'd thee, whom I love, to thoſe victorious Armies of a mighty King, which trample all oppoſition triumphantly under their feet. *See* Annot. [i].

Ver. 10. *Thy cheeks are comely with rows of* Jewels, *thy neck with chains* of gold.] And then will the very outward face of the Church look moſt beautiful, by thoſe various Orders of ſpiritual Gifts, wherewith I will intich her: which ſhall make her appear like a lovely Bride, when ſhe is decked with all her Jewels and Ornaments that add luſtre to her beauty. *See* Annot. [k].

Chorus of Virgins.

Ver. 11. *We will make thee borders of gold with ſtuds of ſilver.*] Unto which all her Members ſhall contribute by their unanimous reſolution, to lead ſuch a life as may adorn their Religion; and make the Church ſhine in ſuch Splendor and Glory, that She ſhall not come ſhort of Royal Majeſty, XLV. *Pſal.* 13. *See* Annot. [l].

Spouſe.

Ver. 12. ¶ *While the king ſitteth at his table, my ſpikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof.*] Whereby ſhe ſhall become fit for the affections of her great Lord, when he ſits upon the Throne of his Glory; acknowledging his Bounty in all the Benefits and Ornaments He hath beſtowed upon her (IV. *Philip* 18.) and making manifeſt the ſweet and fragrant odour of his knowledge in every place: (2 *Cor.* 2. 14. compared with XLV. *Pſal.* 8.) *See* Annot. [m].

Ver. 13. *A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me, he ſhall lie all night betwixt my breaſts.*] From which knowledge every pious Soul ſhall derive the greateſt refreſhment, comfort and ſtrength: and therefore love Him above all things, and reſolve never to let Him ſlip out of their minds; but to preſerve the remembrance of Him moſt carefully, night and day, in their very hearts; as the moſt precious Cordial; in all conditions, unto their Spirits. *See* Annot. [n].

Ver. 14. *My beloved is unto me as a cluſter of camphire in the Vineyards of Engedi.*] And indeed there is nothing of ſuch price, nothing ſo delicious among us for our bodily pleaſure, but ought to put us in mind how much more ineſtimable that knowledge is, which Thou, O Lord, who deſerveſt all our love, vouchſafeſt for the comfort and ſatisfaction of our Souls. *See* Annot. [o].

Ver. 15.

Bridegroom.

Ver. 15. *Behold, thou* art *fair, my love; behold, thou* art *fair, thou* haſt *doves eyes.*] Such ſhall be the language of thoſe who are acquainted with his worth, which ſhall increaſe their mutual affection unto each other: and move Him to give his Church more ſenſible teſtimonies of his love, and repeated aſſurances how amiable her purity and modeſty, her innocence and ſimplicity, as well as her decent Order and comely Government, is in his ſight. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 16. *Behold thou* art *fair, my beloved, yea, pleaſant: alſo our bed* is *green.*] And what can this love of his produce, but new admiration in her, of Him and of his love, burſting forth into ſuch expreſſions as theſe; yea, rather thou art moſt amiable and lovely (XLV. *Pſal.* 2.) not I; whoſe beauty, and goodneſs, is but a weak reflection of thy incomparable perfections: which move Thee to communicate thy ſelf in the moſt delectable Graces, unto all thoſe that love Thee: who making one Body with Thee, may ſay, We feaſt together moſt ſumptuouſly, and are entertained every day with thoſe delights, which grow there only, where Thou vouchſafeſt thy gracious preſence. *See* Annot. [*q*].

Ver. 17. *The beams of our houſe* are *cedar*, and *our rafters of firr.*] Who haſt promiſed to dwell with us, in the ſeveral Churches of thy Saints; which are as ſo many living Temples dedicated to thy ſervice: and being protected and defended by Thee, ſhall remain ſo ſtable and firm, that they ſhall laſt for ever. *See* Annot. [*r*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Verſe* 1. *Song of Songs*] every one knows is an Hebraiſm for the moſt *excellent Song*; as *Holy of Holies* is the *moſt Holy*; and *King of Kings*, the *greateſt King*. And though the moſt natural meaning ſeems to be, that this is the moſt excellent of all the Songs that *Solomon* made, (which were very many, 1 *Kings* IV. 32.) both in its ſtructure and compoſure, and in regard of the Subject whereof it treats, yet ſince the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe, and abundance of Chriſtian Writers, think it called the moſt excellent Song, with reſpect likewiſe to all the Songs that had been formerly made by any Prophetical Perſon, as thoſe, XV. *Exod.* V. *Judg.* 1 *Sam.* II. *&c.* (becauſe *they* celebrated only ſome particular benefits, *this* the immenſe love of God, not only towards that Nation, but towards all mankind) I have not neglected that in my Paraphraſe.

Which is Solomon's.] The Hebrew Words are ſo contrived, that they may either ſignifie *concerning Solomon* (i. e. Chriſt) or of which *Solomon was the Author*. Which, I doubt not, is the firſt and literal meaning; becauſe ſo the LXX expound it; and ſo the ſame Phraſe is underſtood by all, in the Titles of thoſe Pſalms, which are called *Pſalms of David*. But it may be obſerved further, that here are none of his uſual Titles added, as there are in the *Proverbs* and *Eccleſiaſtes*; where he is called *Son of David, King of Iſrael*, and *King in Jeruſalem*. Of which, if any reaſon is to be aſſigned, this ſeems the moſt probable, that thoſe Titles, which have reſpect only to his temporal eſtate, greatneſs and dignity, he wholly forgot, when he was rapt in contemplation of that Celeſtial Prince, the Prince of Peace; in compariſon with whom all others are not worth the naming; and whoſe Character was beſt expreſſed by the name of *Solomon* alone: He being the great *Peace-maker* and Reconciler of God and man.

[*b*] *V.* 2. *Let him kiſs me.*] *Solomon* ſpeaks this in the perſon of the *Virgin Daughter of Sion*; that is the Church. Whom he here introduces in the moſt paſſionate ſtrain, wiſhing for ſome token of love, which is expreſſed under the Metaphor of a *kiſs*. But there is no mention at all made of the Name, condition, or beauty of the Perſon whoſe love is deſired; nor any account given of the beginning or progreſs of this deſire: but he makes her burſt out on a ſudden, and abruptly into theſe Words, *Let him kiſs me*, &c. that he might the more artificially deſcribe the nature and force of Divine Love: Which, when it poſſeſſes the mind, ſnatches it ſo from it ſelf, that it is wholly in him that it loves. It thinks of nothing elſe, ſeeks nothing, wiſhes nothing, ſpeaks of nothing but this alone: and imagines that every Body elſe thinks of the ſame, and knows of whom it ſpeaks.

It is juſt ſuch a beginning as that of the LXXXVIIth *Pſalm*: where the Pſalmiſt enters upon the deſcription of the lovelineſs of Mount *Sion* and Mount *Moriah*, in this manner, *His foundation is in the holy Mountains.*

Kiſſes of his mouth.] As a kiſs given to another, was a token of love and kindneſs, friendſhip and familiarity in thoſe Countries (it being their manner to ſalute their Gueſts whom they invited to their houſe, VII. *Luke* 45.) ſo many *kiſſes* were a token of abundant love, and exceſſive affection; as appears from what is there ſaid by our Saviour of the Woman, who had *not ceaſed to kiſs his very feet*. And therefore the beginning of this Verſe may be thus paraphraſed, *Let Him declare his love unto me, in the moſt familiar and moſt ample manner.*

Of which matter I have noted ſomething elſewhere *; and therefore ſhall only add here that in the Myſtical Divinity of the *Cabbaliſts* theſe are the Words of *Malcuth* the Spouſe, ſpeaking to her *Typheret* the Bridegroom: beſeeching Him to influence her with the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, or with *Binah*, as they ſpeak; that is, *underſtanding*, and *intelligence*, which is called by them the *mouth* of the *Sephirot* or emanations of light.

* Menſa Myſtica.

Better than wine.] *Wine* was the higheſt Entertainment for thoſe Gueſts beforementioned; and therefore uſed by the Hebrews to expreſs the greateſt pleaſure. There was a portion of it alſo to be poured out on the Altar, in their Offerings to God: and ſo may comprehend their Sacrifices, which were the principal part of their Religion. Unto both which I have had reſpect in the *Paraphraſe*.

[*c*] *V.* 3.

[c] *V.* 3. *Savour of thy good ointments.*] *Ointments* alſo were not wanting at all their Entertainments: with which ſome were wont to anoint their whole Heads; or at leaſt their Noſtrils: which they lookt upon as conducing much to health, as well as pleaſure. According to thoſe famous Words of *Alexis* the Poet, in *Athenæus* his *Diepnoſophiſts*, L. II. Cap. 7.

Ἐναλοίφῃ τὰς ῥῖνας, ὑγιείας μέτρον·
Μίσγων· ὀσμὰς ἐγκαράλλῳ χρηστὰς ποιῶν.

Of which Ointments there were exceeding great variety: *four* he mentions in that place, which were in common uſe: but a vaſt number more in his XVth Book, Chap. 11. out of *Apollonias Herophilus*. Who ſhows, in a Book on purpoſe about it, that ſeveral Countries afforded Unguents, that were moſt excellent in their kind. As the beſt of *Roſes* was made at *Phaſelis* and ſome other places; the beſt of *Crocus* came from *Soli* in *Cilicia*; that of *Spikenard* from *Tarſus*, &c. ἡ δ' Συρία τὸ παλαιὸν χρηστὰ πάντα παρέχουσα, &c. Syria *anciently* (though not in his time) *afforded excellent of all ſorts, eſpecially of one*, which he there names.

Now to this uſe of Ointments ſome think *Solomon* here alludes; but I rather think he hath reſpect to his Father's Words, XLV. *Pſal.* 8. and intended hereby to ſignifie the glorious Offices of the *Meſſiah*, whoſe very Name (ſignifying *anointed*) carried in it all that could be deſired: He being anointed by God to be the great Deliverer and Saviour of his people. And theſe firſt Words of the Verſe, the LXX ſeem to me to have moſt rightly underſtood (whom I have therefore followed) who tranſlate them thus; *The ſmell of thy Ointments is above all Spices*: taking *tovim*, which we tranſlate *good* for the *beſt* of ointments.

Therefore do the Virgins love thee.] The attractive power of ſweet Ointments (to which *Solomon* here alludes) is notably declared in that which *Baſil* (*Epiſt. ad Julittam*) relates of the manner of catching Doves. Which was by breeding up one tame, and then μύρῳ τὰς πτέρυγας ἀνῶθεν χρίσαντες, anointing her Wings with Ointment, they let her fly away, ᾗ δὴ τῷ μύρῳ ἑπομένη, &c. and the ſweet odour of the Ointment drew abundance of Pigeons after her; which She brought to the Coate of her owner. See this farther explained in the next Note *d*.

[d] *V.* 4. *Draw me.*] In the beginning of this Verſe I ſuppoſe he comprehends all the Nation of the Jews, as perſons conjunct with him, in theſe Words, *Draw me.* And then ſpeaks in the name of all other people. *We will run after thee.* For ſo the *Hebrew* Writers themſelves by *Virgins* (in the foregoing Verſe) underſtand thoſe, who out of Paganiſm came into the Church, and embraced the true Religion: ſuch as *Jethro* and *Rahab*; who having heard of the Miracles in *Egypt* and in the *Wilderneſs*, joined themſelves to the people of God. And indeed wonderful ardent was the love of thoſe, who came from Gentiliſm unto Chriſt: ſuch as the Woman of *Samaria*, IV. *Joh.* the *Centurion*, VIII. *Matth.* the *Canaanitiſh* Woman, XV. *Matth.* who had ſuch faith as was not found in *Iſrael*.

The king hath brought me, &c.] Here now he ſeems on a ſudden to have had a glance of the *Meſſiah* the great King of *Iſrael*: and in the Spirit of Prophecy to have beheld a glimpſe of thoſe things, *which eye had not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither did they enter into the heart of man.* Which I underſtand here by the Word *chadarau*, which we tranſlate *chambers*: wherein he alludes to the Chambers of the Temple (1 *Chron.* XXVIII. 11.) but eſpecially to the moſt ſecret place of it; into which no man might enter but the High Prieſt alone: till Chriſt came and made way for us into the holieſt of all, which was typified by it.

The upright love thee.] The two laſt Words of this Verſe being capable of various Tranſlations; I have expreſſed the ſenſe ſo largely as to comprehend them all in my Paraphraſe. And ſhall only add; that the whole Verſe may be underſtood after this manner, that the firſt Words, *draw me*, are the voice of the *Spouſe*; the next, *we will run after thee.* the Words of the *Chorus of Virgins.* And then ſhe ſpeaks again, *the King hath brought me into his Chambers*; and then they again expreſs their joy at it in the following Words, *we will be glad and rejoice*, &c. This came into my mind ſince I wrote the Paraphraſe, and ſeems to be the plaineſt account of this Verſe.

[e] *V.* 5. *I am black*, &c.] The principal Myſtery of the Kingdom of Chriſt, being the calling of the Gentiles into fellowſhip with Him (which is oftner called a *Myſtery* in the New Teſtament than any one thing whatſoever) *Solomon* ſeems to ſpeak of that in this Verſe: having beheld, in the rapture wherein he was, the Gentiles flocking to Him, not without the great diſpleaſure of the Jews. Who contemned, and would have excluded them, as people uncapable of his love: unto which the Gentiles are here introduced, making their Anſwer to the Exceptions of the Jews, in theſe Words: *I am black, but comely*, &c. The literal ſenſe of which, and of the next Verſe, I have expreſſed ſo fully in the Paraphraſe, annexing the ſpiritual ſenſe at the end, that I do not think fit to enlarge upon it here. But deſire the Reader to take notice, that the Word *Sechora*, which we tranſlate *black*, denotes ſuch a duskiſhneſs as is in the *Morning*, (called *Sechar* in the Hebrew) when ſome little light begins to appear, and the darkneſs to fly away. Which aptly repreſents the condition of the Gentile World, when they were upon the point of receiving the knowledge of Chriſt. Which this wiſe King *Solomon* might well foreſee would be imparted to them; by obſerving a Type of it in his own Marriage, as well as in the Marriages of other Great Men in former times. Which plainly ſhewed the Jews, if they would have learnt it, that there was no reaſon they ſhould except againſt the conjunction of the Gentiles with themſelves; in the ſpiritual Marriage of both, in one body,

unto Christ. For *Isaac* married *Rebecca* a Gentile, and the Daughter of an Idolater, as appears from her Brother *Laban*, who was no better, XXXI. *Gen.* 19, 30, &c. And this mans Daughters *Jacob* married: whose Son *Judah*, the Prince of their Tribes, took to Wife a *Canaanite* (XXXVIII. *Gen.* 2.) as *Joseph* did an *Egyptian* (XLI. *Gen.* 45.) nay, *Moses* himself, their great Deliverer and Lawgiver, married an *Æthiopian* (or *Arabian*) Woman (XII. *Numb.* 1.) and notwithstanding the anger of his Brother and Sister at this Marriage, would not be divorced from her. *Naasson* also, a Great Man of the house of *Judah* married *Rahab* of *Jericho*, and had by her *Booz*: who took *Ruth* the *Moabitess* to Wife, by whom he had *Obed* the Grandfather of *David*. And indeed the very first Institution of Marriage having (as I have proved in the Preface) a mystical Intention in it, which St. *Paul* unfolds in the V. *Ephes.* these Marriages may well be look'd upon as Emblems of the uniting all sorts of people with Christ, in one Body of the Church.

[f] V. 6. Here they seem to give an account how they came to degenerate, and lose their Original Beauty; by false Prophets and Prophetesses, in the Gentile World, who led them to Idolatry: particularly to the Worship of the Sun, which was the most ancient of all other (IV. *Deut.* 19, XXXI. *Job* 26.) and spread it self as far as the Sun shineth. For it was the Sun whom one Country worshipped under the name of *Baal*; another under the name of *Moloch*; another of *Chemosh*; and others of *Mithras* and *Osyris*. Which last was the name given to it by the Egyptians: among whom the Sun was worshipped in the famous City of *Heliopolis* (which took its name from thence) not far from the Land of *Rameses*; where the Children of *Israel* dwelt while they lived there, XLVII. *Gen.* 11. and so were more easily infected with that Idolatry

[g] *V.* 7.] This Verse I take to be the voice of the whole Church, longing to be acquainted with his Doctrine; which is compared to *food*, as his Disciples are to *Sheep*: Whom Shepherds were wont in those Countries, to lead into cool Shades at Noon, that they might not suffer by the heat. Unto which *Solomon* here alludes; representing all pious Souls as afraid also of wandring from the true Shepherd, and falling, like Sheep that go astray, into the hands of Strangers. All which Metaphors are largely pursued by our Blessed Saviour, in one of his Parables (X. *John*) as comparisons familiarly known to his Disciples, who found them here first used in this Holy Book.

[h] *V.* 8.] To the foregoing Petition, He here returns his Answer. Which needs no other Explication, than what I have given of it in the Paraphrase: unless we observe a difference between *Flocks* and *Kids*. The latter of which signifies the *Goats young ones*; and so may represent the new Converts of the Gentiles who formerly lay under an ill Character, and did *male olere*, as they speak, smell rank of many foul Superstitions. But I am not willing to meddle with such niceties.

[i] *V.* 9. *Company of horses*, &c.] This comparison may convince us, that *Solomon* doth not aim at any single person in this Song (either *Pharaoh's* Daughter, or a beautiful *Shunamite*, or any other Woman or Virgin, who would very absurdly be compared to a *Troop of Horses*) but at a great many united in a Body: *i. e.* the whole Company of Believers in the Messiah; who may very fitly be resembled to the *Horses in the Chariots of Pharaoh*. Whose Kingdom, in those days, abounded with the most excellent Horses: which were famous for their strength, and fitness for service: as may be seen by the provision of them *Solomon* made for himself from thence, 1 *Kings* X. 28, 29; and the great number which came from thence against *Jerusalem*, in his Sons days, 2 *Chron.* XII. 3. Long after which, we read of their great force, XXXI. *Isa.* 1. XLVI. *Jer.* 4, 9. and consequently, the Body of Christian people, that is the Church, being compared to a company of them, is set forth thereby as very powerful, and prevailing over all Opposers.

[k] *V.* 10.] The means of which, is here represented to be by the power of the Spirit; wherewith Christ hath endued his Church. For the manner of Bridgrooms being to present their future Bride, with Jewels, or some other rich Gifts (suitable to their quality and ability) *Solomon* alludes to them, as I take it, in this Verse; and points at the Gifts which his Father foretold (LXVIII. *Psal.* 18.) Christ would dispense, when he ascended up on high to his Throne of Glory: whereby several Orders of admirable men were constituted in the Church, 1 *Corinth.* XII. 28, &c.

[l] *V.* 11.] And the design of all those Gifts, was to make men truly vertuous, which seems to be intended in this Verse (for love and good works are compared to *Gold* in the language of Christ himself, III. *Revel.* 18.) which is the voice of all those that attended upon the Bride.

[m] *V.* 12.] That which makes the greatest difficulty in this Book, is the frequent change of the persons that speak: and it is doubted here, whose Language this is. I take it to be the Bride herself, that here again gratefully acknowledges his benefits, and endeavours to make all the World sensible of them.

Sitteth at his Table.] The King sitting at his Table, signifying his rest and joy after all his labours; I have therefore expounded it of the Throne of his Glory: unto which our Blessed Saviour being advanced, He received power to prefer others; whose honour and dignity is expressed by these two things, *eating at his Table*, and *sitting by him upon Thrones*; which was the same thing in our Saviour's own Language, XIX. *Matth.* 28. compared with XXII. *Luke* 29, 30.

Spikenard.] It is observed by *Pliny* that the most fragrant *Nard* comes from the *Spikes* of a very small contemptible Shrub: which may well be look'd upon as an Emblem of the sweet odour of the Gospel; wherewith such mean and despicable persons, as the Apostles were of themselves, filled all the World by their

their preaching: together with the extraordinary holiness of their lives, which recommended their preaching very much to all observing men. So the *Cabbalists* expound this fragrancy in the Ancient Book *Zohar*. Where *R. Juda* saith, When good works are multiplied in the World, then the *Cheneseth Israel* (i. e. the *Congregation of Israel*, the same with *Malcuth*, in their language) exhales *rich in tovin, good odours*, i. e. most sweet and fragrant odours, being blessed by the holy King, &c. Which Words the Scholiast expounds thus, *She exhales sweet odours to her Husband Tipheret*, and is most acceptable to Him: the lower World (as his Words are) being by this means married to the higher,

[u] *V.* 13. *A bundle of myrrhe*, &c.] The Church deriving the greatest comfort and satisfaction, from his sitting on the Throne of his Glory, resolves here to keep Him perpetually in mind, and in her most hearty affections: which is expressed by *Myrrhe* tied up in a little Bag, and put into the bosom, as the manner was in those Countries, to coroborate the heart, and exhilarate the Spirits.

The bosom of all chast Women is inaccessible to any hand, but that of their Husband: and therefore here signifies the careful preservation of his memory; and of the Doctrine he hath deposited in his Church.

[o] *V.* 14. *Cluster of Camphire.*] Nothing more puzzles Interpreters, than these Words, which we translate *Cluster of Camphire*. For our *Camphire* was unknown to the Ancients; and doth not grow in Clusters, but is the resinous substance of a Tree in *Borneo*, and in *China*: And therefore is far better translated in the Margin of our Bibles, *Cypress*. But by *Cypress* is not to be understood the Tree which bears that name among us; but a far more Aromatick Plant in the East, which was a kind of *Ligustrum* or *Alcharma*, called by *Pliny*, *Cyperus*, and sometimes *Cyprus*: which produced a most sweet Bush of *Flowers*, and also *Berries*, not much different from the fragrancy of Spikenard. Whence it is likely the famous Island *Cyprus* took its name: because here (as at *Ascalon* in *Judea*, and on the the Banks of *Nile*) the best, that is, the most odoriferous *Cyprus* grows. Thus both *Stephanus* and *Eustathius*; the Island *Cyprus* hath its name, ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνούσης ἐν αὐτῇ κύπρου, from the Flower of *Cyprus* growing there: as *Bochart* shews in his *Canaan*, L. I. C. 3. Of which Flowers, or of the Seed, was made that Ointment, which *Pliny* calls the *Unguent Royal*.

But there is one that thinks these Words may be translated, *precious Cluster*, or *Cluster of great value*; to be bought at any rate: because *Copher* denotes the price of any thing, that is purchased or redeemed. Such was the Balsam that came from these Shrubs: which grew at *Engedi* (in the Plains of *Jericho*) after the manner of Vines; and therefore called, as *Bochartus* hath shewn, the *Vineyards of Engedi*. And thus the ancient Hebrew Doctors, by dividing the first Word כפרן have found out the Mystery of the *Messiah* in these Words. Which they understand, as if he had said, *My beloved is unto me* איש כל כפר *the man that propitiates all things*.

[p] *V.* 15. *Behold.*] This and the following Verse, contain the mutual expressions of their love. *First*, of Christ to his Church, in this Verse: and that not only in regard of her inward purity, but of her external Order; both which were remarkable: and therefore the Word *behold* is repeated.

Doves eyes.] The *eyes* shew more than any part else, the inward affections of the Mind: and *Doves eyes* are the Emblems of simplicity, candor, sincerity and putity.

[q] *V.* 16.] Here follows the expression of the Church's love to Christ: whom she acknowledgeth to be the Fountain of all that is in her.

Our bed is green.] By *Bed* I understand their *Table*; about which they sat on Beds strewed with flowers, or such fragrant Greens as were in season.

[r] *V.* 17. *Our house*, &c.] This last Verse I take for a description of particular Churches: by the *Roof* or *covering* of which I understand their protection. And it being made of *Cedar* and *Firr* there seems to be an allusion to the Temple; in the Fabrick of which these were employed, as most durable and incorruptible. Others take that Word we translate *Firr* to signifie *Cypress*: which is still nearer to the sense I have given of this Verse. Which sense will not seem at all forced, unto those who consider that not only the whole Body of the faithful, which is the Church Universal, but the parts of it, or single Churches, such as that at *Ephesus*, are represented by the Apostle, as *an holy Temple*, an *habitation* or *dwelling-place of God*: which is built upon Christ, and with Him makes up one House of God, (H. *Ephes.* 20, 21, 22.) Nay, every particular faithful person is not only a *living Stone*, as St. *Peter* speaks in that Building, but is called also a *Temple* of God; who dwells in holy Minds by his Spirit, 1 *Cor.* III. 16, 17. VI. 19. So that the *Bride* and the *Chorus of Virgins*, might well, both with respect to Christ and to one another, use the Style of *Our House*, in this description of his Dwelling-place.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins a new Colloquy, *which hath two principal Parts. In the* first *of which the* Bridegroom *owns the praises to belong unto Him, which had been bestowed upon Him, in the Conclusion on the foregoing Chapter, v.* 1, 2. *and the* Bride *again declares her high admiration of Him, and satisfaction in Him and his love; as infinitely surpassing all other enjoyments, and deserving greater love to Him, than could be expressed (v.* 3, 4, *&c.) With which Ecstacy of love He declaring Himself to be highly pleased, v.* 7. *then follows the* second *Part wherein she sets forth the wonderful power of Divine love to enlighten their mind, and to obtain the favour of illuminations from above. For now she speaks (v.* 8, 9, *&c.)*

as if she saw Him, and heard his voice, inviting her to partake of the Blessings, which his appearing brought to Mankind. The secure possession of which she also hears him promising to her, v. 14, 15. and thereupon promises Him most faithful obedience, v. 16, 17.

Bridegroom.

Verse 1. I Am *the rose of Sharon*, and *the lily of the valleys.*] I am indeed the Fountain of all true delight and pleasure: the Rose of *Sharon* being not more grateful to the smell, nor the Lily of the Valleys to the sight, than the knowledge of me is to the mind of those who are acquainted with me. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*) Whereby thou, my dearly Beloved, art become not unlike to me; appearing in such lustre and beauty among the Nations of the World, as the Lily doth among the Thorns that grow in desart places. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Spouse.

Ver. 3. *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*] And Thou appearest far greater and more lovely in my eyes, than the greatest Princes of this World; who are no more to be compared with Thee, than the wild Trees that bring forth nothing but Leaves, or only harsh or insipid Trash, with the goodly Apple-tree, when it is laden with its beautiful and pleasant Fruit. Who can express the satisfaction which his protection affords! Under which I have constantly enjoyed a sweet repose; pleasing my self in the delightful thoughts of the blessed Fruits of his coming among us, and of what He hath purchased for us. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me* was *love.*] Which administers the highest joys to those who taste of them; and hath entertained, or rather feasted me, with such delicious hopes, that I cannot but glory in this, that I am listed under his Banner whose Motto is *Love*: whereby He hath overcome, shall I say, or over-powered my heart, to submit my self wholly unto his wonderful love. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I* am *sick of love.*] Under the weight of which, who can support himself, when it sensibly touches his heart? I faint, I languish, I die, when I am deeply affected with that love: which overwhelms my spirit; and makes me call for a greater Power than my own to enable me to bear the thoughts of his mighty love. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *His left hand* is *under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.*] And whence should I have that power but from Himself? who then communicates most of the Grace of his Holy Spirit to us (which is the greatest token of his love) when he sees our hearts fullest of love to Him. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Bridegroom.

Ver. 7. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please.*] In which He would have us take an uninterrupted pleasure, saying, I beseech, I charge you (all you that are her Companions), I conjure you by all that is dear to you; not to discompose, or give the least disturbance to that love: but let it enjoy its satisfaction, to the height of its desires. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Spouse.

Ver. 8. 9. *The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.*] Which Words of Grace can come from none but Him, who is worthy of all our love: whom, behold, I see, though He be afar off: I see with what delight He comes surmounting all difficulties and discouragements, to do the Will of God, XL. *Psal.* 7, 8. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 9. *My beloved* is *like a roe, or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the latteſs.*] The swift motion of the Roes and wild Goats is but a weak Emblem of his readiness to come down to us. And, though He do not yet actually show Himself among us, I see notwithstanding something of Him; and behold Him approaching nearer and nearer to us: like one, that resolving to be our Guest, doth not presently enter; but first stands behind the Wall of our House; then looks in at the Window, and through the Lattisses or Grates; whereby He is still more fully discovered. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*] And I hear his voice (who is worthy of all our love) calling unto us to meet Him with our most forward desires, saying; Awake thou, who art most dear unto me, thou who art most beautiful in my eyes; arise and stay no longer, but come away from these dark representations of me.

Ver. 11. *For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over* and *gone.*] For now that dismal time is past, wherein ignorance, error, and wickedness overflowed the World, as Floods do the Earth in the Winter-Season: those cloudy and uncomfortable days are over, wherein thou couldest see and enjoy but little of me. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 12. *The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of* birds *is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.*] All tokens of a new World appear, and invite thee to come and partake of those joys and pleasures which the nearer approaches of the Sun of Righteousness produces: Who makes all manner of Blessings spring up in such abundance that it causes the heavenly Host to sing for joy; and therefore cannot but fill all Mankind with joyful Hymns unto Him. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*] And for this especially, that their dead hopes are revived, and they receive the earnest and beginnings of that future bliss: the expectation of which is our greatest comfort in this life, and the consummation of it our highest happiness in the next: And therefore I say again, Awake, and stir up thy desires, thou who art most dear unto me, thou who art most lovely in my eyes; arise, and go, and take possession of those inestimable benefits. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 14.

Bridegroom.

Ver. 14. ¶ *O my dove*, thou art *in the clefts of the rock, in the ſecret* places *of the ſtairs, let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for ſweet* is *thy voice, and thy countenance* is *comely.*] And be not afraid of thoſe who, ſeeking to deſtroy thee, force thee to flee, like an innocent Dove, to hide thy ſelf and ſeek for ſafety in Holes of the Earth, in Caves, and Dens and ſecret places; but from thence look up unto me, and call upon me, with praiſes and thankſgivings, and I will ſave and deliver thee: for I love thee inſeparably, who art moſt amiable in my eyes, whoſe prayers and praiſes I delight to hear, and to behold my own Image that is formed in thee. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 15. *Take us the foxes, the little foxes that ſpoil the vines: for our vines* have *tender grapes.*] And therefore I require all thoſe that act by authority from me, and to whom I have committed the care of my Church, to uſe their early diligence alſo to diſcover and confute the ſophiſtry of Deceivers, who craftily inſinuate their falſe Doctrines into weak and incautious Souls; and thereby ſeduce thoſe who are newly converted, or but infirm in the Faith. *See* Annot. [*o*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 16. ¶ *My beloved* is *mine, and I* am *his, he feedeth among the lilies.*] Unto which I hear the Church reply, I will preſerve my fidelity to Him, who is my only Beloved, as I am his; I will have nothing to do with thoſe ſeducing Spirits, but adhere to Him alone: whoſe dwelling is not among ſubtil and crafty, but with ſimple and candid Souls. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Ver. 17. *Until the day break, and the ſhadows flee away: turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.*] Only let Him be pleaſed to vouchſafe his gracious preſence with me, and to enlighten me more and more; till we have a full knowledge of Him and of his Will, (XIII. *Rom.* 11, 12.) and the light of it ſcatter all the ſhadows of the law: Let my Beloved alſo make haſte to ſuccour and relieve me in all difficulties and diſtreſſes; and ſhow the ſame readineſs for my preſervation, that he did (*v.* 9.) for my firſt ſalvation. *See* Annot. [*q*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Verſe* 1.] There is ſo little ground to apply the ſeveral Parts of this Song, to the ſeveral Ages of the Church, till the end of all things, that I cannot think fit to follow ſuch Interpretations. But ſhall purſue the Method I have begun, and obſerve that the *Meſſiah* is here introduced, as owning the Praiſes which the Church had beſtowed upon Him in the concluſion of the foregoing Chapter. And that in ſuch Phraſes as are becoming a Paſtoral; borrowed from Flowers and Trees (under which Shepherds delight to ſit and eat the Fruit) and from ſuch Creatures as frequent the Fields and Woods, *&c.*

I am the roſe] And in this Verſe He firſt compares Himſelf to a Roſe: which is ſtill one of the goodlieſt things to which a great Prince can be likened in thoſe Eaſtern Countries. As appears from a Letter, written by the great *Mogul* in the Perſian Tongue, to K. *James*, ſent by Sir *Tho. Roe*: wherein he thus complements his Majeſty of *Great-Britain*, *As upon a Roſe in a Garden, ſo are my eyes fixed upon you: God maintain your Eſtate, that your Monarchy may proſper*, &c. But it was chiefly prized by Shepherds, and Shepherdeſſes; and accounted by them ἔρωτος τυπὸν, as *Philoſtratus* ſpeaks, the Plant of Love. Inſomuch, ſaith he, that if the great King have his Diadem on his Head, the Soldier his Helmet, as the greateſt Ornament; beautiful Youths ſhould have Chaplets of Roſes, ὡς ἂν ζωγράφοις ἐοικότες, ὡς ἂν τὸ κάλλιστον ἔχοντες; as near of kin to them both in ſweetneſs and in ruddineſs. And *Achilles Tatius* (L. 1. Ἔρως, &c.) thus commends this lovely Flower. If *Jupiter* would ſet a King over the Flowers, it would be the *Roſe* that ſhould reign over them: *being the Ornament of the Earth, the ſplendor of Plants, the Eye of Flowers, the bluſhing Beauty of the Field, or refulgent brightneſs*, &c.

Of Saron] i. e. The moſt excellent Roſe: For ſuch were the Roſes of *Saron*; as may be gathered from hence: That the *Roſe*, according to *Pliny*'s Obſervation, delights in dry places; and will not thrive in fat and unctuous Soils, in rich Clays, or Grounds well watred, but in thoſe that are lean, full of rubbiſh, *&c.* Now ſuch was the Soil about *Saron*, as we learn from the *Miſchneh* in the Title *Sota*, Chap. VIII. where they that *built a brick Houſe in Saron* are ſaid to have been deprived of the benefit of that Law.

XX. *Deut.* 5. Upon which Paſſage *R. Solomon* gloſſes, that the Earth thereabout was unfit for making Bricks; being ſo dry and crumbling that the Houſes that were built of them, had need to be repaired twice in *ſeven* years. Inſomuch, that the *Jeruſalem-Talmud* ſaith, *The High-Prieſt prayed by name for the Saronites, upon the Day of Expiation, that their Houſes might not be converted into their Graves.*

Lily of the valleys.] By this *Lily* we are not to underſtand ſuch as we call *Lilium convallium*, or *May-Lily*: but ſome more noble and fragrant Flower; being joined here with Roſes: As it is in ſeveral Poetical Fragments (quoted by *Athenæus*, L. XV. C. 8, 9.) with Violets, Marjoram, and divers other ſweet Flowers. Inſomuch that he ſaith the *Corinthians* called the *Lily* by the name of *Ambroſia*: and he tells us out of *Nicander*, that it was eſteemed χαρμ' Ἀφροδίτης, *the joy and delight of Venus*, because of its beautiful colour: And ſmell alſo, I ſuppoſe; for in the XIIth Chapter of the ſame Book, he quotes a Paſſage out of *Theophraſtus*, who, treating of ſweet Ointments made of Flowers, mentions τὸ ἐκ τῶν κρίνων, *that of Lilys*, as well as that of Roſes.

But notwithſtanding all this, the *Lily* being vulgarly celebrated only for its beautiful colour, I have taken notice of that alone in the Paraphraſe.

[*b*] *V.* 2. *As the Lily*, &c.] They that believe in Chriſt partaking of his Excellencies, He here compares the Church to a *Lily* (i. e. to Him-

Himſelf) as much excelling all other people who were not Believers (for *Daughters* ſignifie *people* in the Hebrew Language) as the *Lilies* do *Thornes*, which grow in deſolate places. For the Word we tranſlate *Thornes*, is wont to be joined together with thoſe which ſignifie *Nettles and Brambles*, XXXIV. *Iſa.* 13. IX. *Hoſea* 6.

[c] *V.* 3. *As the Apple-Tree*, &c.] To this the the Church here replies; and expreſſes her reciprocal affection, in ſuch Words as may be applied to ſignifie his preheminence over all other gods; whom they were wont to worſhip under Trees, as we read in XII. *Deut.* 2. 1 *Kings* XIV. 23. LVII. *Iſai.* 5. and many other places.

I ſat down under, &c.] In the latter Part of this Verſe, and in thoſe that follow, ſhe turns her Speech to her Companions and Attendants; relating the ſatisfaction and joy ſhe took in his love.

[d] *V.* 4. *He brought me*, &c.] Which is ſet forth by a Banquet, whereby (it is well known) the Hebrews are wont to repreſent the joys, even of the other World. And what greater joy have we here than to think of the ſtupendous love of God our Saviour towards us? which cannot but ſubdue our hearts to love Him intirely. So I have paraphraſed the latter part of the Verſe (*his Banner over me was love*) taking in two ſenſes of which the Words are capable. The moſt obvious is that *Love was the Inſcription in his Banner*: the other that *He conquers only by Love*; a Banner diſplayed ſuppoſing an Armed Force marching under it. *Dalberrius* in his *Electa*, L. 3. C. 9. hath not unfitly gloſſed upon the Words, thus; "The "Banner of our Lord is his love which he "hath publickly declared to us, that He "might draw us to Himſelf: by which alſo "when we are come to Him, He retains us "with Him; and ſtrengthens us by the ſame, "when we fight with our ſpiritual Enemies. "And that we may alway look upon it and "never quail, He carries it over us; that is, "renders his love moſt familiar to us. He "that knows not this Banner, can be none of "his Soldiers; and he that deſerts it, is un-"done, unleſs he preſently return to it. So "that as the *Roman Legions* had their ſeveral "names (one of which was called the *Pious*, "another the *Faithful*, another the *Thun-"dring*, another the *Victorious* &c.) in like "manner the Chriſtian Band may be called "*Amoris Legio*, the Legion of Love.

[e] *V.* 5. *Stay me with flagons*, &c.] This Verſe is a deſcription of one falling into a ſwound, by the abundance of her love: In which caſe Cordial Spirits are wont to be called for, to revive ſuch perſons, and keep them from fainting quite away. Comfortable ſmells alſo are wont to be adminiſtred to the Noſe; which is the meaning of calling here for fragrant *Apples*, *Oranges*, *Citrons*, &c. (as well as Wine) which are all comprehended under the name of *tappuach* in the Hebrow: which is a Word that in its very Original imports an *exhalation*, or *odour-breathing* from that which is ſo called. By all which the Church is repreſented to be ſo marvelouſly affected with the love of Chriſt, as to be even oppreſſed under the weight of Divine Benefits: and at a perfect loſs what to think of them; having little or nothing to return for ſuch infinite obligations.

[f] *V.* 6. *His left hand*, &c.] This is a repreſentation of the tendereſt affection of an Huſband to his Wife, when he ſees her in danger to faint: and being applied to Chriſt and his Church ſets forth his readineſs to ſuccour us, in all our needs, by the power of his Spirit. I go not about to divine what is diſtinctly meant by the *left-hand*, and what by the *right* (which I look upon as too great a curioſity in Interpreters) but take them both to expreſs one and the ſame thing. And the *hand of the Lord* ſignifying oft-times in Scripture, the power of the Spirit, I have applied them to that.

[g] *V.* 7. *I charge you*, &c.] It is dubious whether this Verſe be the voice of Chriſt or of the Church. I take it to be his: who is the good Shepherd, repreſented in this Paſtoral Song. Which, ſuitable to its nature, is ſtill full of Rural Similitudes, taken from the *Roes* and the *Hinds*: which are moſt amiable Creatures (as hath been obſerved upon VI. *Proverbs*) with which not only Shepherds, but the greateſt Perſons in the World have delighted themſelves. And that Word which we well tranſlate I *charge you*, I take to be only a ſolemn form of earneſt beſeeching and intreaty (which all perſons are wont to make by thoſe things that are deareſt to them) not an adjuration, which it is not lawful for any to make, but only by God. I have contented my ſelf therefore with this ſimple Paraphraſe of that Paſſage; and ſought for no myſtical Interpretation, as the manner is, which may be found in moſt Interpreters. Who, among other things, by *Roes* and *Hinds* underſtand the *Angelical Powers*: to which the *Cabbaliſts* apply theſe Words, and would have them to ſignifie as much, as *I adjure you by the Tribunal of Juſtice whence the wicked are puniſhed.*

[h] *V.* 8. *He cometh leaping*, &c.] To the ſame ſort of Creatures, and to young wild Kids, he alludes in this verſe. For they are numbred among thoſe Creatures, which are moſt nimble, in running, jumping and leaping, even to the tops of Mountains; as *Bochartus* hath largely ſhown: demonſtrating that what we tranſlate *young Hart*, v. 9. is the *young wild Goat*. I ſeek therefore for no Myſtery here neither; but take the Words to be a deſcription only of our Lord's alacrity and cheerfulneſs, to come down from the Heavens (which may be meant by *Mountains*) to dwell among us, who live here below upon the Earth. Yet I ſhall note, that they ſeem to be moſt ingenious, who hereby underſtand his paſſing by Angels (for ſo ſome tranſlate the Words, *skipping over the Mountains*) and leaping, as it were, over their heads, to take upon Him the nature of Man.

[i] *V.* 9.] In like manner, it is a very ingenious conjecture, that his *ſtanding behind the Wall*, in

in this Verſe, may be applied to his ſhewing Himſelf in thoſe days only in the Law of *Moſes* (which was the Wall of partition between the Jews and us) and his *looking through the Window*, or *in at the Window*, &c. to his ſhewing Himſelf then in Figures and Prophecies, which they had of Him; by which He was known but obſcurely to them. But I have not meddled with this in the Paraphraſe.

[k] *V.* 10, 11. *Lo the winter is paſt*, &c.] In theſe Verſes *Solomon* repreſents his voice ſpeaking to them by the Prophets (though He himſelf was not come) and calling them to Him, as if He was juſt appearing. For by the *Winter* and the *Rain*, I underſtand with *Theodoret*, ὁ καιρὸς ὁ πρὸ τῆς παρουσίας, *the time before his coming*: when the Gentile World was buried in Diſmal darkneſs; and the Jews themſelves ſaw things only through Clouds: and neither of them had much of the warmth of the Divine Law.

[l] *V.* 12. *The flowers appear*, &c.] And then here follows a deſcription of the Spring: which is ſet forth by three things; the *appearing of the flowers*, which had lain as if they had been dead; the *ſinging of Birds*; and the *voice of the Turtle*. Which as *Ariſtotle* obſerves (L. VIII. *Hiſtor. Nat.* C. 3.) diſappears in Winter, and comes forth again when the Spring is a little advanced: and therefore is here very properly mentioned in the laſt place, among the Notes of the Spring. Which being the time of all other moſt welcome to Shepherds, for the feeding of their Flocks, and for all manner of pleaſures, repreſents, as the ſame *Theodoret* conceives, ὁ μετὰ τὴν παρουσίαν, *the joyful time after our Saviour's coming*. When a new World appeared, and there was a greater abundance of Divine Bleſſings, eſpecially of the Spirit, poured forth: which the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* takes to be meant by the *voice of the Turtle*. Which is a kind of Dove; in the form of which the Holy Ghoſt deſcended at our Saviour's Baptiſm. And then the *ſinging of Birds* may be applied to the Songs of the heavenly Hoſt, at his Birth. Others will have this *Turtle* to have been the Figure of *John* the Baptiſt: which is alſo pat enough: But I have only toucht upon ſuch things, and do not think fit here to enlarge upon them. But conclude this Note with this Obſervation, that *Benjamin Tudelenſis*, in the Concluſion of his *Itinerarium* expreſly applies theſe Words to the coming of the Meſſiah: ſaying, that *they cannot be gathered to their own Land, till that time of the ſinging of Birds come, and the voice of the Turtle; and till they come who preach glad tidings, ſaying alway the Lord be praiſed.* *R. Alſchech* alſo applies the voice of the Turtle to *Elias*, gloſſing thus, *The voice of the Turtle alſo hath it not been heard in our Land, by the means of the Prophet? according to that which is ſaid, Behold I will ſend to you Elias the Prophet*, IV. Mal. 5.

[m] *V.* 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth*, &c.] After the Spring-time, here follows a deſcription of the entrance of *Summer*: of which the putting forth green Figs, and the blowing of the Vines, nay the knotting of the Grapes, were a ſign. In the end of which the *Harveſt* coming, hereby is denoted, ſaith the ſame Father (*Theodoret*) ὁ μέλλων αἰὼν οὗτος, *the World which we expect hereafter*: unto which I have applied this Verſe. Where, it may be obſerved, that *Fig-trees* and *Vines* are fitly joined, for they were wont to be planted together, XIII. *Luke* 6, 7.

[n] *V.* 14. *O my Dove, that art in the clefts*, &c.] Some of the Hebrew Writers, whoſe ſenſe the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* expreſſes, refers this to the people of *Iſrael* flying from *Pharaoh*, like a Dove before the Hawk that is ready to ſeize her: but may be better referred to the Church of Chriſt, in danger to be torn in pieces by her Pagan Perſecutors, and by the *Jews* themſelves; as it was in the beginning of our Religion. Which forced Chriſtians to hold their Aſſemblies under ground, in obſcure places (where they ſung Hymns to our bleſſed Lord before the break of day) and made the Church perfectly like a Dove, who, being in fear of ravenous Birds, flies into Clefts of Rocks, and to ſecret Holes in ſteep places, to preſerve herſelf.

The Church is ſo often compared by Chriſt to a *Dove* in this Book, that it is fit to give ſome account of it. And *Bochartus*, *de Sacr. Animal. p.* II. *L.* I. *C.* 4. takes this to be the principal, if not the only reaſon of it; to ſignify her to be his only Beloved: and that He alone alſo is moſt dear to her. For in *Doves* there is a wonderful love (obſerved by many Authors) between thoſe that are once pared: who never part, but keep faithful the one to the other. And ſo are a fit Emblem of the Church, whom the Apoſtle ſaith he had eſpouſed to Chriſt as a chaſte Virgin, 2 *Cor.* XI. 2.

Let me ſee thy Countenance] that Word which we tranſlate *countenance* or *aſpect*, may be rendred *ſhape* or *faſhion*: denoting all the comely proportions of the Church, by her likeneſs to to her Lord Chriſt.

[o] *V.* 15. *Take us the Foxes.*] *Foxes* abound in *Judæa*, and are obſerved, by abundance of Authors, to love Grapes, and to make great devaſtations in Vineyards. Inſomuch that *Ariſtophanes* in his *Equites* compares Soldiers to Foxes; ſpoiling whole Countries, as they do Vineyards. Now the Prophet *Ezekiel* comparing falſe Prophets to Foxes, XIII. 4. it hath led all Interpreters (in a manner) to underſtand by Foxes in this place, *Hereticks*: who appeared very early in the Church, and therefore are compared to *young Foxes*: in regard of their known craft and ſubtilty, windings and turnings, ſhifts and evaſions; whereby the more ſimple ſort eſpecially, and ſuch as were newly converted (compared here to *tender Grapes*, as the Church it ſelf is to a *Vine*) were in danger to be undone, unleſs a timely care was taken to prevent it. And therefore this Verſe ſeems to be an Anſwer to the Churches Prayers, flying to her Lord for refuge. Who ſeeing her danger not to be greater from Tyranny, than from falſe Teachers, calls upon his Companions; that is, the Apoſtles

postles, Bishops, and Pastors of the Church to look after them, and to take them in their craftiness. And that whilst they were *young*; in the beginning, that is, of their appearance in the World: because their *vain bablings were apt to encrease to more ungodliness, and their words did eat as a Gangrene*, &c. 2 *Tim.* II. 16, 17. Especially when the Church was but newly planted, and those Seducers applied themselves chiefly to such as had but newly received the Faith, or to weak and unsettled people: who were easily caught by them, unless great care were taken to discover their frauds, and to confute their Sophistry.

Which was the taking of these *Foxes*, as *Theodoret* expounds it: And St. *Bernard* also; who observes that he saith *take to us* the Foxes: that is, *Sibi & Sponsæ, to Himself, and to his Spouse*. As much as to say, if it be possible, let them be reconciled to the Catholick Church, and brought back to the true Faith. If that could not be, then other methods succeeded; and the Apostles *delivered up* such dangerous Deceivers *unto Satan* (which was a punishment that included in it bodily affliction) that they might learn not to blaspheme, 1 *Tim.* I. ult.

[p] *V.* 16. *My beloved is mine*, &c.] As the former Verse was his Answer to the Churches Prayers; so this is the Churches acknowledgment to Him for his care: together with a profession of such firm adherence to Him, as suites with the name of a *Dove* which he had bestowed on her, *v.* 14.

He feedeth.] To *feed*, viz. his Flock, is to have his abode among them. *See* VI. 2.

[q] *V.* 17. *Until the day break*, &c.] All that she desires farther, is only his gracious presence with her; which she begs in this Verse He would vouchsafe her *upon the Mountains*; that is, those steep places mentioned before, *v.* 14. (where the Church was fain to worship Him in great secret, because of the present danger) especially while any Disputes and Controversies remained about the Jewish Ceremonies which were a great disturbance to the Church; as well as the afflictions and persecutions she endured; which are compared to the *night* and *darkness*, as the other to *shadows*.

Turn, my beloved.] The Word *turn* doth not suppose Him absent: but only that He did not immediately attend, or show the regard He had to her Prayers in distresses.

Like a Roe.] See Chap. VIII. *v.* ult.

Mountains of Bether.] *Bether* is the same with *Bethel*, these two Letters, *r* and *l*, being easily and often changed, as *Bochartus* hath observed (in his *Geograph. Sacra*, Part. 2. L. I. C. 23.) in many instances. As for Example, an Island in the *Persian* Gulph, is indifferently called *Tyrus* and *Tylus*: and *Tavila* in *Spain* is the same with *Tabira*: and *Caralis* in *Sardinia* the same with *Calaris*, &c. In another Work indeed of his, *de Sacris Animal.* he takes *mountains of Bether* for Mountains *full of Clefts*. Which would agree well with what went before, *v.* 14. and might be handsomly applied to the State of the Church, when there were many breaches and rents in it: but the other is plainer and more literal.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the third *of those* interlocutory *Discourses, which compose this famous Song: part of which only is contained in this Chapter. In which the* Bride *and her Companions speak all; but one Verse, which seems to be spoken by the* Bridegroom. *For whose coming she still longs; and is introduced full of solicitude about it. Which proved not in vain, but was gratified with so much satisfaction in the hope of it, that, as He takes care it should not be disturbed, so all her Companions rejoice exceedingly in it. For those are the* two *parts also of this Chapter. In the* first *of which she testifies her earnest desire to find Him; who filled her with joy, when she had got a sight of Him (in the* four *first Verses:) in the* second, *they that attended on her after He had renewed his former charge, v.* 5.) *are transported with joy, to behold the multitude of his Followers; and the greatness of his Royal Glory. Which is the sense of the rest of the Chapter.*

Spouse.

Verse 1. BY *night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.* Many have been my thoughts about Him, who (by what the Prophets have foretold of Him) is become the Beloved of my Soul. But though I have sought Him in the greatest retirements, and when my mind was most composed, and that one night after another; though with a diligent search I have sought Him in all the holy Books; yet I can find no more than predictions and shadows of Him, which assure me He will come, but cannot bring me to the sight and clear knowledge of Him. *See* Annot. [a].

Ver. 2. *I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.*] Whereupon I resolved to leave these private Studies, and to go abroad and consult with others: And there is no place which I have not frequented, where I thought I might learn any thing of Him. For I have fetch'd a compass round the whole City of *Jerusalem* (which is the holy City, the joy of the whole Earth) and there is not one Street, not any place of publick resort, but I have gone into it, and inquired after Him, both in the lesser and greater Assemblies; I inquired of all the holy men I could meet withal: but could meet with no more tidings of Him; whom my Soul longs to see, because I love Him above all things. *See* Annot. [b].

Ver. 3. *The watchmen that go about the city, found me:* to whom I said, *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*] But in the midst of these anxious thoughts there was some satisfaction presented to me, from some of those great Ministers of God, who watch for the good of others; and employ themselves every where to direct his people: of whom I made the same enquiry if they could tell me any thing of Him, who had engaged my affections so much, that I could

could not often enough profeſs my love unto Him. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. It was *but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mothers houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*] For I received ſuch illuminations from them, that I had not long left their Company, before I ſaw this beloved of my Soul, as if He had been actually preſent with me; Which tranſported me with ſuch joy, that I could not think of parting with ſuch a ſight, but took faſt hold of Him; to keep Him with me, till I had ſhewn unto all that wait for Him, what I had been ſo happy as to find my ſelf. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Bridegroom.

Ver. 5. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love.*] And here again I heard Him graciouſly renew the Charge He had given before (II. 7.) to all my Companions, ſaying, I conjure you by all that is dear to you, not to diſcompoſe, or give the leaſt diſturbance to this love: but let it enjoy its ſatisfaction, to the height of its deſires. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Companions.

Ver. 6. ¶ *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderneſs like pillars of ſmoke, perfumed with myrrhe, and frankincenſe, with all powders of the merchant?*] And now, what is this that we ſee? Who is this goodly perſon? or rather this Crowd of people coming up out of deſolate places, in one Body, to Mount *Sion*: and appearing like the Pillars of Smoke which ariſe from the Altar of Burnt-Offering; and no leſs acceptable to God, than the ſweet odours that aſcend from the Altar of Incenſe, in the Holy place? *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *Behold, his bed which is Solomons, threeſcore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Iſrael.*] Behold the love which the great King hath to her, having prepared all things for her reception into Society with Himſelf: of whoſe Royal perſon and happineſs *Solomon* himſelf in all his Glory, is but a Figure. Who is magnificently attended indeed, and ſtrongly guarded in his Palace, by a number of valiant perſons that encompaſs him night and day, in his Bed, and in his Throne: but are not comparable to the power, and force, and multitude of that heavenly Hoſt, which ſecure the Church in her enjoyments, and take care of her continual ſafety. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *They all hold ſwords, being expert in war: every man hath his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of fear in the night.*] Who are all unanimouſly bent, and in a conſtant readineſs (like that Guard of valiant men about *Solomon*, with their Swords drawn in their hands) being no leſs skilful than able to ſuccour and defend his people, from all the aſſaults of their inviſible Enemies; who ſeek to deſtroy them, by raiſing terrible perſecutions againſt them. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 9. *King Solomon made himſelf a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.*] But all in vain: for, as King *Solomon* hath cauſed a Chariot of the choiceſt Cedar to be made for him, and for his Royal Spouſe, to appear in publickly, when he makes his progreſs through the Kingdom; ſo doth this far greater King ride on proſperouſly (XLV. *Pſal.* 4.) by the means of ſuch Inſtruments as He himſelf hath formed, and enlarges the Borders of his Church, by the preaching of his everlaſting Goſpel. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *He made the pillars thereof of ſilver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple; the midſt thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jeruſalem.*] Unto which the magnificence and riches of that Chariot is not worthy to be compared; tho' the Pillars of it being of Silver, the Back, the Sides, and the Seat being of Cloth of Gold, the Curtains and Covering of it being of the brighteſt Purple, the Carpet alſo under the feet being curiouſly wrought with the moſt lovely Figures, by the Daughters of *Jeruſalem*, they make it very inviting to all Spectators: For what is this to the wonderful love of God, and to the Riches of his Grace, in his great and precious promiſes (far dearer to all good Souls than thouſands of Gold and Silver) which the Goſpel calls us not only to behold, but to enjoy? *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his heart.*] Make this then a Feſtival Day, and let no Domeſtick cares hinder you from bearing a part in the publick joy: but as all the Daughters of *Jeruſalem* went out to behold the Glory wherein King *Solomon* ſhone, when he appeared in State, with that Royal Crown, which his Mother put upon his head, on his Marriage-day, that day which compleated all his joys (XLV. *Pſal.* 15.) So let all the people of God every where admire and extol the ſurpaſſing Glory of that great King, who ſhall appear to be crowned with Glory, Honour, and Joy by God Himſelf; on that happy day, when he ſhall publickly own His Church, and give her the higheſt teſtimony of His endleſs love, XIX. *Revel.* 6, 7, 12. *See* Annot. [*l*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Verſe* 1.] The beginning of this Chaper might be connected with the foregoing, and applied to the State of the Church under Affliction; if the following Words would ſuit with that Expoſition, which they do not, in my Opinion: For He had deſired to *hear her voice*, v. 14. of the ſecond Chapter, and now ſhe cannot find Him. Therefore I incline to think, that the very ſame thing is again repreſented in other Words (after the manner of the Prophets; particularly of *Iſaiah*, who over and over again, in ſeveral ſchemes of ſpeech foretels their reſtauration from the Captivity of *Babylon*, and, under that ſhadow, their greater ſalvation by Chriſt) viz. the earneſt deſire of the Church for the coming of Chriſt: which *Solomon* expreſſes by the paſſionate longings he found in himſelf to ſee that bleſſed day.

By night.] And ſo by *night*, may be underſtood that dark time, which was before his appear-

ing; when good men ſought for Him, and had many Dreams and Viſions about Him; but could meet only with the ſhadows and images of Him; which ſignified, Him to come, but did not exhibit his very preſence to them. Of which neither the Temple, nor the Sacrifices, nor the ſacred Books, could diſcover any thing clearly: but was repreſented here to *Solomon* in a Viſion he had of Him, and of the Church which was eſpouſed to Him, after he had ſought a long time, and groped every where after Him, in that dark night wherein they lived. So, as I ſaid, the *nights* may be expounded: for ſuch a diſmal condition were they in, juſt when He appeared, IV. *Matth.* 16. I. *Luke* 79.

On my bed.] This is expounded with ſtrange variety by Interpreters: ſome underſtanding hereby the *bed of affliction*, others, the *bed of eaſe and pleaſure*, others, *of weakneſs and infirmity*, &c. But I have taken both *bed* and *night*, in the moſt ſimple ſenſe, to ſignifie the *time* and *place*, for moſt compoſed thoughts: according to the meaning of IV. *Pſal.* 4.

[b] *V.* 2. *I will riſe now.*] To riſe up ſignifies more active diligence, than before had been uſed.

Go about the City.] By the *City* may be underſtood *Jeruſalem*; that is, the whole Church of the Jews, whereof it was the Head; and therefore the Figure of the Church of Chriſt in future times, LXII. *Iſai.* 5, 6, 7. XII. Heb. 22.

In the ſtreets, &c.] *Schevakim*, which we tranſlate *Streets*, are the leſſer thorow-fares in the City, or the Streets of leſſer Cities: as *Rechoboth*, are the greater, wider Streets, or rather the *Streets* of the Royal, Capital City: ſignifying here his ſearch both in the leſſer and the greater Aſſemblies of God's people.

[c] *V.* 3. *The Watchmen that go about*, &c.] By *Watchmen* I underſtand the Prophets, and ſuch like excellent perſons who inſtructed the people (III. *Ezek.* 17. XXXIII. 6, 7.) of whom he asks, if they *ſaw* Him, whom he ſought after. From which Word I gather that he ſpeaks of ſuch, as were anciently called *Seers*: of whom he ſaith he was found; that is, they ſhewed him ſomething of the *Meſſiah*.

[d] *V.* 4.] For ſo it follows here in this Verſe, that not long after his Diſcourſe with them, he *found Him whom his ſoul loved*, i. e. came to the knowledge, or had a ſight and enjoyment of Him. In which Viſion (looking upon Him as actually come) he endeavours to retain Him, and to bring Him into the Temple, there to ſhew Him to all the pious Worſhippers of the Divine Majeſty. For that is literally the *Houſe of my Mother*: As *Cheller Corathi* (*the Chamber of her that conceived me*) I take to be the inward part of that Houſe; or the *moſt Holy place*.

[e] *V.* 5. And there he expreſſes his affection to Him (that is, to the Church, whoſe paſſionate deſires *Solomon* here repreſents in the four foregoing Verſes) in the ſame Words, as he had done before in foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 7. where this Verſe is already explained.

[f] *V.* 6. *Who is this*, &c.] Here begins a new Viſion, which he had of multitudes of people gathering unto Chriſt, like a Cloud of Smoak: which fills his *Companions* with great admiration. For it is their voice, which we read in this Verſe, where the Word *zoth* may be tranſlated either *what*, or *who*: and by the *Wilderneſs*, may be underſtood the forlorn condition, wherein men were before, not only in *Gentiliſm*, but even in the *Jewiſh* Eſtate. Which made it more wonderful, that the Church ſhould come thus richly adorned (expreſſed here by the *Perfumes* of her Garments) to be brought in State and Pomp to the King's Palace; there to be eſpouſed to Him. But all that gave up themſelves to Him becoming thereby an holy people, were highly eſteemed by Him: and therefore compared here to the *Pillars of Smoak* (as I take it) that went up every day from the Altar of Burnt-offering, at the Temple, before-mentioned; and aſcended in a ſtrait Line, like a firm Pillar, that was not in the leaſt moved from its uprightneſs, though the Wind blew never ſo boiſterouſly. So the Jews report in *Pirke Avoth*, C. 5. and in other Books: where theſe are reckoned among the *ten Miracles* which were ſeen in the Temple: that *the greateſt rain never put out the fire; and the moſt vehement winds never diſperſed, or in the leaſt bent the ſmoak*: but it went up ſtedfaſtly to heaven. And how acceptable ſuch perſons were to Chriſt, is farther repreſented by the *ſweet Perfumes* which were burnt upon the Altar of Incenſe. For *Solomon*, I conceive, here alludes (in the laſt Clauſe of this Verſe) to that compoſition, which God ordered to be made of ſweet Spices for his own ſervice at the Tabernacle: which none might preſume to imitate, or make uſe of in other places, XXX. *Exod.* 34, 35, *&c.*

[g] *V.* 7. *Behold his bed*, &c.] And here is farther repreſented in the ſame Viſion, the happy condition of the Church (ſignified by the *Bed of Solomon*) in ſociety and fellowſhip with Chriſt: of whom *Solomon* was a Type, both in his Royal Perſon, and State and Marriage (as appears from *Pſal.* XLV.) whoſe *Bed* or *Throne* (for the *Thrones* of the Eaſtern Kings, were in the form of a *Bed* or *Couch*, wherein more perſons than one might ſit, III. *Rev.* 21.) was ſecured by the moſt valiant men in the Kingdom. Who are ſaid to be *threeſcore*, a determinate Number being named (as the manner is) for an undeterminate. Though ſome conceive that *Solomon* doubled the number of that Band of mighty men, which was in *David*'s Time, which conſiſted of *thirty*, 2 *Sam.* XXIII. 13, 23. In the end of which Chapter, *v.* 39. we read alſo of *thirty and ſeven* perſons, who were of great note for their valour. To whom if we add the *eleven* Princes mentioned in 1 *Kings* IV. beginning: and the *twelve* great Officers, which had the care of making proviſion for his houſhold in the ſeveral Provinces, *v.* 7. they make juſt this Number of LX. And may be lookt upon as a Figure of that ſtrong Guard, which is about the proſperity and happineſs of the Church: which is defended by Angels, who are mighty ones indeed, and very numerous

(LXVIII.

(LXVIII. *Pſal.* 17.) and all miniſtring Spirits for thoſe that are Heirs of ſalvation, I. *Heb.* ult. nay, the moſt mighty of the heavenly Hoſt, it may be eaſily proved (if this were a place proper for it) are the Guardians and Protectors of Chriſtianity.

[*b*] *V.* 8. *Becauſe of fear in the night.*] And do all of them unanimouſly oppoſe the *ſpiritual wickedneſs*, i. e. wicked Spirits, *in high places*; who ſeek to deſtroy the Church (VI. *Epheſ.* 12.) and may be meant by the *terror of the night*, as the Hebrews expounded the XCI. *Pſal.* 5. and being the Rulers of the Gentile World ſtirred them up to perſecute Chriſtianity, as deſtructive to their Kingdom of darkneſs.

[*i*] *V.* 9. *Made himſelf a chariot.*] But, in ſpite of all they could do, *Chriſt* is here repreſented under the Type of *Solomon*, as carrying his Church triumphantly through the World (for the Word *appirjon*, which is never elſewhere uſed, ſeems to ſignifie an *open Chariot*, in which *Solomon*, and, perhaps, his Queen, rode, to be expoſed to the view of every one, in the Streets of *Jeruſalem*) who beholding her, and the love of Chriſt to her, were thereby invited to become Members of his Church.

Moſt Lexicographers derive this Word *appirjon* from a Root which ſignifies to fructifie; and therefore will have it to ſignifie a *Bed*. But *Avenarius* I think more probably hath derived it from two Words; which give it the ſignification of ſomething carried on Wheels: and therefore muſt denote, at leaſt a *Chariot having a Bed or Cuſhion in it.*

The wood of Lebanon] is Cedar; denoting the perpetuity of the Goſpel: the preaching of which is the *Chariot* here mentioned. So *Theodoret*, by the φορεῖον (as the Greek tranſlates it) ἐξῆρε Ἀποστόλους νοήσωμεν, &c. *Let us underſtand*, ſaith he, *the holy Apoſtles, who carried the name of the Lord before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Iſrael*, &c. Theſe were literally *made* and formed by Chriſt *Himſelf*: whereas the Chariot wherein *Solomon* rode, he could only command or direct others to make.

[*k*] *V.* 10.] The deſcription of the richneſs of this Chariot of *Solomon's*, follows in this Verſe: in which we are not to ſeek, I think, for ſome thing in the Goſpel anſwering to every part of it; but only to look upon it as ſetting forth the great ſplendour of it, and the riches of that Grace, which God vouchſafed to men therein. The particular parts of the Chariot I have deſcribed as well as I could in our Language; and inſerted in my Paraphraſe another Tranſlation of the laſt Word *mibbenoth*: which ſignifies as well *from* or *by*, as *for*, *the Daughters of Jeruſalem*. The moſt ingenious of which it is likely were employed in working that *Foot-cloth* which lay at the bottom of the Chariot, with elegant Figures: of Shepherds and Shepherdeſſes, perhaps, and all their innocent courtſhips. So that Phraſe may be interpreted, *paved with love*: but I have contented my ſelf in the Paraphraſe to ſay only, with *lovely Figures*.

Some think they find in this Chariot, an imitation of that Seat, whereon God Himſelf ſat between the Cherubims; with which they have compared it: But I cannot be perſuaded that *Solomon* would be ſo audacious.

[*l*] *V.* 11.] Nor do I ſee any foundation for the fancy of the Hebrews in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. XV. (which the Chaldee Paraphraſe touches upon) where they make the day of *Solomon's Eſpouſals*, to be the next day after the Feaſt which he held *ſeven* days, for the Conſecration of the Temple, 1 *Kings* VIII. 66. Which was *the day of the gladneſs of his heart* indeed; but cannot be called his *Eſpouſals*. Which was not the day of his *Coronation* neither; for then he did not ride in a Chariot, but upon his Father's Mule; and was not crowned by his Mother, but anointed by *Zadock* the Prieſt and *Nathan* the Prophet, 1 *Kings* I. 33, 34.

The day of his eſpouſals.] Therefore was the day when he took *Pharoah's* Daughter to Wife; at which time, it was the manner to *crown* married perſons: and his Father being dead, it was done by his Mother. Of this Cuſtom mention is made by many Authors; which the learned Reader may find in *Bochart*, his *Geographia Sacra*, Part 2. L. 1. C. 25. Where he applies that Paſſage in *Ezekiel* unto this, XVI. 8. 11. *When I looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love* (i. e. thou waſt fit for marriage), *I entred into a Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine; and I put a Jewel in thy forehead*, &c. *and a beautiful Crown upon thy head.* For the *Miſneh* informs us, that this Nuptial Crown was in uſe among the Jews, as well as other Nations.

All which I do not ſee how it is any other way applicable unto Chriſt, than I have expreſſed in the Paraphraſe. The Church indeed her ſelf may be ſaid to be his *Crown* and Joy, in that ſenſe wherein St. *Paul* ſaith the *Theſſalonians* were his, 1 Theſſ. II. 19. But this is not to put a *Crown* upon Him; and the Church can in no ſenſe be called his *Mother*, eſpecially ſince She is his *Bride*. And therefore herein Interpreters ſtrain too much; who ought, I think, to have aſcribed that to God the Father in the myſtical ſenſe, which is aſcribed unto *Bathſheba* in the litteral.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The firſt ſeven Verſes of this Chapter I take to belong to the foregoing: and are the Words of the Bridegroom, *who praiſing the incomparable beauty of his Spouſe, and aſſuring her ſhe ſhould ſtill appear more lovely and illuſtrious, concludes the* third Scene, *as ſome call it, of this Dramatick Poem. And then begins a new repreſentation at the* eighth *Verſe; which continues to the* ſecond *Verſe of the* fifth *Chapter, and compoſes the* IV*th part of this Song. Wherein the* Bridegroom *expreſſes his love to his* Spouſe, *his eſteem of her, and joy in her in Words of greater dearneſs, and higher kindneſs, than have been hitherto uſed. Which ſhe prays may be continued; and he graciouſly grants, inviting all to partake in their joys.*

Bride-

Bridegroom.

Verſe 1. *BEhold, thou* art *fair, my love, behold, thou* art *fair, thou* haſt *doves eyes within thy locks; thy hair* is *as a flock of goats that appear from mount Gilead.*] Great is thy Beauty, O my Beloved, admirable is thy beauty, worthy of mens contemplation. Whom I can liken to nothing better than to a pure and chaſt Virgin (2 *Cor.* XI. 2.) whoſe modeſt eyes fixed only upon Him to whom ſhe is eſpouſed, ſparkle within her Locks, when ſhe is unveiled: and who appears to want none of thoſe comely Ornaments, which are wont to ſet off the natural beauty of the face. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Thy teeth* are *like a flock* of ſheep that are even *ſhorn, which came up from the waſhing: whereof every one bear twins, and none* is *barren among them.*] Part of whoſe grace lies in the ſweetneſs of the mouth, full of white and even teeth; none of which ſtand out, or are longer than the reſt, but all cloſely ſet both above and below in exact order and equality: being firm and ſound alſo, without any breach, or want of ſo much as one of them. *See* Annot. [b].

Ver. 3. *Thy lips* are *like a thread of ſcarlet, and thy ſpeech* is *comely: thy temples* are *like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.*] To which add fine and delicate lips, of a bright and lively Crimſon-colour; with a ſweet and charming voice; and cheeks that appear of as pure a white and red, when the Veil is off, as the Bloſſoms of Pomegranates. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *Thy neck* is *like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thouſand bucklers, all ſhields of mighty men.*] And all this upon a goodly Body, of a proper and tall ſtature; whoſe round and well-formed Neck reſembles that lofty Structure of the Tower of *David*, which may be a Pattern of other neat and elegant Buildings; and is not more adorned with the Shields and Bucklers of his Worthies, which hang there in great abundance, than it is with Pendants, and a Necklace of Pearl, and other Jewels, which have been the Treaſure of mighty Princes. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Thy two breaſts* are *like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.*] Below which the two Breaſts riſe up, purely white, exactly round, of a juſt ſize and equal bigneſs; which put me in mind of two young Kids, that being formed together, and brought forth at the ſame time, are ſo perfectly like, that none can know the one from the other; the tops of whoſe heads I have ſeen, at a diſtance, appear like the Teats of theſe Breaſts, as they fed in the ſame Field among the Lilies. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *Until the day break, and the ſhadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrhe, and to the hill of frankincenſe.*] Such as this is the beauty of my Church, as will be ſeen more fully, when the Night of Perſecution is gone which hides it from the eyes of worldly men: though in the mean time ſhe is moſt lovely in mine; and no leſs precious than the Mountain and the Hill from whence are fetch'd the moſt excellent Perfumes and the richeſt Spices. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *Thou* art *fair, my love* there is *no ſpot in thee.*] To ſay all in one word, Thou, my Love, art the perfection of beauty: there being a moſt admirable harmony between the ſeveral Orders, Eſtates, and Degrees of men in the Church; and not the leaſt ſpot or blemiſh (V. *Epheſ.* 27.) to be found in its conſtitution. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Bridegroom.

Ver. 8. ¶ *Come with me from Lebanon,* my *ſpouſe, with me, from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards.*] And now that all the World may ſee I have eſpouſed, nay married thee unto my ſelf (XXI. *Reu.* 2.) come from thoſe horrid Mountains whither thou haſt fled for ſafety (II. 14, 17.) where, tho' I was preſent with thee; yet, thou waſt not free from danger, but expoſed to the rage and cruelty of furious and troubleſome men: Come, I ſay, and dwell there no longer; but look down from thence, and behold the goodly heritage, and the pleaſant ſtate that I have prepared for thee. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 9. *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter,* my *ſpouſe; thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.*] Thou haſt ſtrongly engaged my affection; thou haſt indeared thy ſelf unto me, my tenderly beloved Spouſe; thou haſt intirely poſſeſſed thy ſelf of my heart, by that lovely unity which I ſee between thy Paſtors, and between the people that live in holy obedience to them. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *How fair is thy love, my ſiſter,* my *ſpouſe! how much better is thy love than wine! and the ſmell of thine ointments than all ſpices.*] Thy love to me and my Commandments, O how amiable is it! how doth it indear thee unto me, my beloved Spouſe! How much more delicious is that love, which thy Members have one for another, and for all men, than the beſt entertainments the World can give! How much more grateful are the reſt of thy Vertues, than the odours of the richeſt Spices, even of thoſe that are burnt at the Altar. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Thy lips, O* my *ſpouſe, drop* as *the honey-comb: honey and milk* are *under thy tongue, and the ſmell of thy garments* is *like the ſmell of Lebanon.*] Nor are thy words leſs pleaſing than thy deeds, the honey that drops of it ſelf from the Comb, being not more ſweet, ſincere, and pure, than thy Doctrine, O my beloved Spouſe: which is the delicious Food of young and old, of weak and ſtrong, and moſt powerfully recommended to their affections by the famed holineſs of thy life; which like the ſtrong Perfumes that come from the Aromatick Plants of *Libanus*, fill all places with the delightful ſcent thereof. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. *A garden incloſed* is *my ſiſter,* my *ſpouſe: a ſpring ſhut up, a fountain ſealed.*] For as a Garden well planted, watred and defended abounds with all ſort of Flowers, and with variety of pleaſant Fruit; ſo doth my well-beloved Spouſe, by the ſingular care and ſpecial Providence of God over her, with all the fruits of righteouſneſs; admitting none to her Myſteries, but thoſe who are pure and holy, and waſh'd from all their defilements. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 13. *Thy Plants* are *an orchard of pomegranates, with pleaſant fruits, camphire, with ſpikenard.*]

ward.] Which makes the ſeveral Orders and Ranks of thy young Novices (ſuch is the exemplary purity of their lives) look like the young Setts of Pomegranates, and other odoriferous Fruit: ſuch as the Cyprus, and Spikenards, which are growing up into a Paradiſe. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 14. *Spikenard and ſaffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincenſe, myrrh and aloes, with all the chief ſpices.*] Planted only with the like precious Herbs, Shrubs and Trees to thoſe now mentioned; as Saffron, ſweet Cane, Cinnamon, with thoſe that yield Frankincenſe, Myrrh, Aloes, and the choiceſt Spices: which are not more ſerviceable to our health or pleaſure, than that rare compoſition of Graces, which is viſible in the Church, make her Members acceptable unto God, and uſeful unto men. *See* Annot. [*o*].

Ver. 15. *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and ſtreams from Libanon.*] Whoſe Vertues are preſerved in life and vigour by that heavenly Doctrine, which flows from me as plentifully and perpetually, as Waters do from thoſe Springs that break out of the high Mountain *Libanus*: which run continually in a large Stream; and, ſupplying all the Gardens in the neighbouring places, keep them freſh and flouriſhing. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 16. ¶ *Awake, O north-wind, and come thou ſouth, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out: let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits.*] O let not then the inſpirations of the Holy Spirit, and its manifold Gifts be wanting unto me; but breathe perpetually upon me, as the North and the South Wind do upon this Garden: and then ſhall I be a Paradiſe indeed; and not only fill the World with the ſweet odour of the knowledge of Chriſt; but take the boldneſs to invite Him, the Beloved of my Soul, to come and reap the delightful Fruits (*v.* 13.) of his own care and labour. *See* Annot. [*q*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*n*] *V.* 1. *Behold thou art fair.*] The Lord of the Church is here introduced, deſcribing the beautiful eſtate of it, under the perſon of a lovely Virgin: whoſe elegant features are particularly repreſented to raiſe admiration and love in others, and to give the Church the comfort of being ſo amiable in his eyes, whom no beauty can pleaſe but that which is Divine. And they are repreſented, by compariſons borrowed from the Country: which was moſt ſuitable to a *Bucolick*, or *Paſtoral* Poem: as, I have already ſaid this is.

Thou haſt doves eyes.] And firſt her eyes are compared to thoſe of a *Dove* (for ſuch Reaſons as are ſuggeſted in the Paraphraſe) *when they are unveiled*, as thoſe Words *mibbaath letſammatech* may be tranſlated (of which ſee *v.* 3.) unto which I have had reſpect in my Paraphraſe, as well as to our Tranſlation, where this Phraſe is rendred, *within thy locks.*

Thy hair, &c.] Then the hair of this Virgins head is compared unto that of Goats, as the next Paſſage is to be tranſlated, by repeating the word *Hair* in this manner; *Thy hair is like the hair of a flock of Goats.* Thus the people of *Iſrael* are ſaid to have brought for the ſervice of the Tabernacle, *ſcarlet, and fine linen, and goats*; that is, *Goats-hair*, as we truly tranſlate it, XXXV. *Exod.* 23. And in the next Chapter, *v.* 13. he made *Curtains of Goats* (where we ſupply the word *Hair*) for the Tent over the Tabernacle, according as he had been ordered, XXV. 4. XXVI. 7. Upon which Paſſages *Abarbinel* obſerves, that *Moſes* makes no mention of *Wool*, either of Lamb or Sheep; becauſe that was vile and contemptible in thoſe Countries, in compariſon with the Hair of Goats: which was wont to be ſhorn, not only there, but in other places; for *Ariſtotle* obſerves the ſame of the Goats of *Cilicia*. And ſome of them had a Wool, as we may call it, ſo fine, that it was almoſt as ſoft as Silk: which was that the Women ſpun for the uſe of the Tabernacle, XXXV. *Exod.* 26. To this ſort of Hair, perhaps, there may be an alluſion in this place, in regard of its *ſofineſs*, as well as length and thickneſs; which is a great commendation of Hair in men and women.

But there was alſo a *coarſer* or *harder* ſort, with which they made Locks and Ornaments for the Head, when they were bald, or would appear very fine: as *Braunius* hath obſerved, in his Book about the Prieſts Garments, *L. I. C.* 9.

And in general it may be obſerved of hair, that it was always accounted a very great Ornament: which made *Philoſtratus*, in a Letter of his to a Youth whom he loved, beſeech him by no means to cut it off, οὐ γὰρ χρυσὸς, ἀνθρωπε, ἢ ἔρως, ἐν ᾧ τρίχες κρῶνται, there being no leſs beauty in a good Head of Hair, than in Gold, in Silver, in Pendants, and ſuch like Ornaments. Which he illuſtrates by what it contributes to the greatneſs of ſeveral other Creatures, as the *Lion*, and *Horſe*, &c. and was notably expreſſed by *Lycurgus*, when he gave this reaſon, why he ordered in his Laws that his Citizens ſhould take care of the growth of their hair, becauſe it made *beautiful perſons more comely, and deformed more terrible*; as *Plutarch* relates in his *Apophthegms*.

That appear from mount Gilead.] *Galaad* was a Mountain fit for Goats to brouze on, as may be ſeen in *Bochart*: which ſhows theſe laſt Words of this Verſe ſhould be thus tranſlated: *that aſcend from mount Gilead*, to the higher parts, that is, of that Mountain, or of that Country.

I ſhould have adventured to compare the Apoſtles and Prophets to theſe two *eyes*; who being illuminated by the Holy Ghoſt (repreſented by a Dove) and having no other aim, but ſincerely to make Chriſt and his Religion known in the World, reſembled the *eyes of Doves* (ſee Chap. II. v. 14.) but I did not know to what the *Locks* and the *Hair* could be handſomely applied; and therefore I have lookt upon theſe, and the reſt that follow, only as parts of thoſe things that make up together a perfect beauty. *Theodoret* hath made the

apteſt application, that I can find, which is this: that *hair* ſignifying what is ſuperfluous, the meaning may be (if there be any of every particular in this Deſcription) that *even in humane things, and worldly Affairs, wherewith we cannot but be ſometime perplexed, the Church behaves her ſelf laudably and preſerves a* decorum.

[b] *V.* 2. *Thy teeth are like a flock of ſheep.*] Here follows a deſcription of the *Teeth*; which are a great part of the beauty of the mouth, as that is of the Face. And their beauty conſiſts in their whiteneſs; in their evenneſs and juſt proportions; and in their cloſeneſs and firmneſs: ſo that there be none wanting, nor any Gap between them. Which are all here expreſſed, and ſaid to be like a *Flock of Sheep come from the waſhing*, in reſpect of whiteneſs; and as equal as if they had been exactly poliſhed and fitted for their places, in juſt proportion, by an Artificer (ſo the Word we tranſlate *ſhorn* ſignifies) they that are below alſo anſwering to thoſe above, as if they were *Twins*. And none of them *miſcarry* (ſo that which we tranſlate *barren* ſhould be rendred) *i. e.* drops out of the mouth: which is as much as to ſay, there is a perfect number, as well as order of them.

Now the *Teeth* being the Inſtruments whereby we chew our Meat, they may be lookt upon as an apt Emblem of the inferior Paſtors in the Church: who prepare Chriſtian Doctrine for the people. Which Application, though I have not adventured to make in my Paraphraſe (becauſe I take theſe *five* firſt Verſes to mean no more, but only to ſet forth the lovelineſs of the Church in general, by the Figure of a Virgin, of a moſt accompliſhed beauty) yet, I ſhall here note, for the help of thoſe whoſe thoughts lead them that way, that the Vertues of ſuch Paſtors are, *candor, purity, order, concord, exact agreement among themſelves, one of them not ſeeking ambitiouſly to over top the reſt.*

[c] *V.* 3. *Thy lips,* &c.] In the beginning of this Verſe there is no great difficulty: it being certain that *Schani* (the colour of the lips) ſignifies ſome very bright and reſplendent colour; which ſtrikes the eyes ſharply (as it originally ſeems to import) *viz.* either *Scarlet*, as we tranſlate it, or *Crimſon*, or *Purple*: ſuch as the Poets call *Coral Lips*. Whoſe fineneſs is here compared to a *Thread*; and is another great part of Beauty: as a ſweet accent of the *Voice* alſo is; nothing being more ungrateful than a tone that is coarſe and clowniſh.

If any liſt to apply theſe particularly to ſomething in the Church; the *Lips* may be thought to ſignifie the Teachers in the Church, who delivered the Doctrine they had learnt from the higher Miniſters; who had prepared it for them; and, by them, for the people. And then the *voice* ſignifies their excellent manner of preaching: inſinuating into the hearts of thoſe that heard them; being accompanied with great modeſty and humility, though full of authority and power. Unto which only the laſt Clauſe of this Verſe can be applied; which is this,

Thy Temples are like a piece of a Pomegranate, within thy locks.

Where *two* or *three* Words puzzle Interpreters. *Firſt*, that which we tranſlate *Temples*; which are not reckoned as a part of the beauty of the face, eſpecially being cover'd by the *Locks*: and why they ſhould be likned to a *Slice of a Pomegranate*, is hard to tell. *Grotius* therefore, by the Temples underſtands the *Cheeks* (as the *Vulgar* doth) which in regard of their redneſs, are like to the Grains or Kernels within a Pomegranate. So the *Chaldee* indeed interprets the other Word, a *piece of a Pomegranate*: when he thus gloſſes, *they are repleniſhed*, (*viz.* juſt and pious men to whom he applies it) *with Precepts, as a Pomegranate*: i. e. as a Pomegranate is with Kernels or Grains with which it abounds, and to which that Interpreter no doubt, hath reſpect.

But our learned Dr. *Caſtell* hath out of the Neighbouring Languages more clearly explained both theſe Words, and the laſt alſo: and hath made them all eaſy and natural, by ſhewing that the whole Clauſe is thus moſt exactly tranſlated: as the *Flower of the Pomegranate, ſo are thy Cheeks without a Veil.* So he tranſlates the laſt Words, which we met withal before, *v.* 1. *mibbaath leſſammatech* not *within thy locks*; but *without a Veil.* That is, when thy veil is laid aſide, thy Cheeks appear of a moſt lovely colour; for ſuch is that of the Pomegranate-Flower; the pureſt white and red, moſt exactly mixed. V. *Orat. in Schola Theolog.* p. 37.

[d] *V.* 4. *Thy neck is like,* &c.] The *neck* being compared to the Tower of that goodly Fortreſs, which *David* made upon Mount *Sion*, which overtopt all the reſt of the Buildings of the City of *Jeruſalem*, denotes, among other things, the tallneſs, of the whole Body.

Built for an armoury.] This Tower is ſaid to be built *letalpijoth* (for an *Armoury* we render it) which the LXX knew not what to make of, and therefore retain the Hebrew Word: and others do but gueſs at its meaning; having no certain Rule, from whence to feteh its Original. *Aquila* tranſlates it *Fortifications*; but *Symmachus* tranſlates it *heights*: which laſt I have followed, adding another ſignification alſo derived from *alaph*, to *teach* or *inſtruct*.

Thouſand bucklers.] This Tower it ſeems was adorned with the *Shields* and *Bucklers* of thoſe mighty men mentioned 1 *Sam.* XXIII. and ſuch like Worthies: With which *Grotius* ingeniouſly compares thoſe precious Stones, which are wont to be the Ornament of the Neck. But what anſwers to this in the Body of the Church, I know not; unleſs we admit the Opinion of *R. Solomon* and others of that Nation: who will have this to be the place where the *Sanhedrim* had a Room called in their Language *Liſkath haggazith*, *the Chamber* or *Parlour of ſquare Stones* (which ſome Interpreters have thought to be the meaning of *built letalpijoth* with ſquare Stones) where Judgment was adminiſtred, and their Diſcipline preſerved. Which was the ſtrength and ſupport of the Nation, as the General Council of the Apoſtles and Elders, mentioned

Acts

Act. XV. was of the Christian Church: who settled all doubts and Controversies, as future Councils were to do, and thereby maintained the Church in order and peace. From which *Theodoret* doth not much differ, when he saith the Church hath many Shields, whereby it is defended. *For thou art armed with all the Weapons of the Spirit* (saith he, paraphrasing upon these Words) *whereby thou easily woundest thy Enemies*, &c. *and sometimes dost refel them by the Prophets, sometimes by the Apostles; and layest open their weakness.*

[e] *V.* 5. *Thy two breasts*, &c.] The *two Paps* rise upon the Breast, like Lilies from the Ground: among which if we conceive two red Kids, feeding, that were Twins and perfectly alike, they appeared like the *Nipples* or *Teats* upon the Paps, to those that beheld them afar off. Thus *Bochart* explains this Comparison: which sets forth the exact proportion, and the pure complexion of the *Breasts*; unto which, most think the Two Testaments, the Old and the New, very aptly answer in the Christian Church, just as *R. Solomon* hereby understands the two Tables of Stone in the Jewish. But they forgot that this is a description of the parts of the Church (not of things belonging to it) and can be applied to nothing, that I can think of, but the two Orders of Preachers, that were, one among the Jewish Christians, and the other among the Gentiles, as *Gregory* the Great expounds it. Who think these are called *Twins*, because of their perfect agreement and concord in the Christian Doctrine: though one of them bent their endeavours most toward the conversion of the Jews, and the other of the Gentiles. And indeed they that taught the first Rudiments of Christian Doctrine, went forth by Pairs, as we read *Luke* X. where Christ is said to send them forth *by two and two*; to admonish them how necessary their concord was; and that they had need to be assistant, all they could, one to the other in such a difficult Work.

[f] *V.* 6. *Mountain of myrrh*, &c.] Here now the description stops, and proceeds no farther to the lower Members of the Church: which are not particularly commended, but it is only intimated that, in conjunction with their Guides and Directors, they made up a beautiful Body; though for the present obscured by the Night of Persecution, as the first Words of this Verse may be applied. Which Body might be well compared to a *Mountain of Myrrh, and Hill of Frankincense*, that is, to Mount *Moriah* and *Jerusalem*, say the Hebrew (and so the Church is called the *New Jerusalem* in the Revelaion (where the sweet incense made of these and other Spices (XXX. *Exod.* 34.) were continually burnt in the Temple.

I know it is commonly thought that other Mountains (afterwards mention'd, *v.* 8.) are here meant: about which I shall not dispute. But only observe that these two *Myrrh* and *Frankincense*, were among the most precious Spices of those Countries (and therefore here mentioned) as appears by what we read in *Athenæus* (L. I. *Diepnosoph.* C. 3.) who, speaking of the noble Entertainments, which were made by several persons that overcame in the Olympicks, tells us that *Empedocles*, being a *Pythagorean*, and eating no Flesh, when he won the Prize, caused an Ox to be made of *Myrrh* and *Frankincense*, and other precious Spices, which he divided among the Spectators. And (Cap. 8.) he puts these two among those things, which were accounted τρυφὴ, delicacy. And *Hermippus* relating what places were most famous for several things, saith — ἀπὸ δ' ἧς Συρίας λιβανωτὸν, that Frankincense came out of *Syria*, Cap. 21. The Verses also of *Archestratus* (L. III. p. 101. make mention of *Syria*, and say these were used for Perfumes at Feasts. The same I observe in other places of that Author; and therefore have made the allusion here only to the preciousness of these things; which were no where so excellent as in those Countries. And I have taken this Verse to be still in praise of the before-described Beauty: for it is evident, from the following Verse, he had not yet done with that matter.

[g] *V.* 7. *Thou art all fair*, &c.] And here, to comprehend all that could be said, he enlarges the commendation which he began withal *v.* 1. and concludes in these Words, that there was no defect in any part: but altogether they made up a compleat Beauty without the least speck of deformity. Which is not to be applied to every particular person in the Church: but, as I have taken it in the Paraphrase, to the admirable Constitution of the whole, in which there was no imperfection.

[h] *V.* 8. *Come with me from Lebanon*, &c.] Here now begins a new representation; as appears by this that the Stile wherein the *Bridegroom* speaks is altered; she who hitherto hath been called his *Love* or *Friend*, being now called his *Spouse*, and never before: though very frequently in the following part of the Song. Which hath moved Interpreters, I suppose, to use this name throughout, rather than the other: as the higher and most excellent Title. *Theodoret* therefore here begins his *Third* Book, very judiciously: and we may look upon this as a description of the Church, coming out of the state of Persecution: and receiving greater testimonies of her Saviour's love than ever. For coming from the top of high *Mountains*, where there were *Lions Dens*, and where *Leopards* inhabited; cannot well signifie any thing else, than coming from places where they were in danger to be devoured by their Persecutors: who are compared to *Lions* in many places of Scripture.

As for the Mountains themselves, they are well-known where they were. Only *Amana* some have fansied to be that Mountain in *Cilicia*, called *Amanus*: which is reckoned among the highest; and joined by *Ælian* with *Libanus* and *Carmel*. We read also that there were Tygers and Panthers, &c. in this Mountain; which hath been brought to countenance this Opinion. But *Judæa* and the neighbouring Places, being the Scene of this Poem, we are not to go so far off as *Cilicia* to seek for *Amana*: for as *Senir* and *Hermon* were but parts of the same

ſame Mountains; ſo *Amana* was a part of *Libanus*, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved in his *Canaan*, L. I. C. 5. And though the lower parts of this Mountain *Libanus* were very pleaſant; yet the top of it, which is here ſpoken of, was horrid, and inhabited with wild Beaſts. From whence the *Spouſe* is invited to come into more delightful and ſecure places: for ſhe is compared preſently after to a *Garden* or *Paradiſe*, v. 12, 13, &c. And it is no wonder *Solomon* ſhould have the ſtate of the Chriſtian Church in trouble, thus repreſented to him: it being very ſuitable to the ſtate of the Church of the Jews, when it was firſt formed; being then preſſed by *Pharoah*, and many other Enemies afterward, before they came to *Canaan*.

[i] *V.* 9. *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart*, &c.] The firſt Word of this Verſe *libbavtini* (which is not to be found any where elſe) ſignifies ſome extraordinary motion in the heart. And is tranſlated by ſome, *Thou haſt wounded my heart*; by the LXX (which we follow) *thou haſt taken away my heart*: but may as well be tranſlated, *Thou haſt taken poſſeſſion of my heart*; and deeply engaged my affection. Which is expreſſed by the addition of another name for her, whom he called *Spouſe* in the foregoing Verſe; and here alſo calls *Siſter*. Which is only a Word of tenderneſs and indearment, uſed by Husbands to their Wives; as appears by the Book of *Tobit*; where *Raguel* calls his Wife *Edna*, his Siſter, VII. 16. and *Tobias* calls *Sara* by the ſame name, after he had married her, VII. 4, 7.

One of thine eyes, &c.] All the difficulty here is, what may be thought to be meant by *one of her eyes, and one chain of her neck*. Some take *eyes* to ſignifie Faith and Charity; others the Church of the Jews and Gentiles; and then *one eye* muſt ſignifie one glance, one look of thy eyes: but nothing pleaſes me better than the old Interpretation of *Alcuinus*, who by the Word *one* underſtands *oneneſs* or *unity*: and by the eyes (as *v.* 1.) the Paſtors and Guides of the Church: And by the one *wreath of hair about the neck*; the pious unity of the people ſubject unto them.

It may be interpreted alſo, *the leaſt glance I have of thee and of thy beauty, mightily engages my love to thee*; for the eyes are the very *Seat of Love*, as abundance of Authors expreſs it.

[k] *V.* 10. *How fair is thy love.*] The *love*, or rather *loves* (as it is in the Hebrew) which is here extolled; may ſignifie our love to God, and unto one another. And *Ointments*, be applied, to all the Graces which flow from thence.

[l] *V.* 11. *Thy lips diſtil*, &c.] That which diſtils from the lips, as Honey from the Comb, can be nothing but pure and moſt delicious Doctrine; delivered in ſuch a manner, as to invite all to taſte of it. For this by all ſorts of Authors is compared to Honey; and made *Xenophon* be called the *Attick*, and *Sappho* the *Pierian Bee*: becauſe of the ſweetneſs of his Orations, and of her Poems. When the rare Eloquence of *Plato*, is ſaid to have been predicted by *Bees*, which came and ſat in his mouth, when he was an Infant: which is reported alſo, by no mean Authors, of *Pindar*, *Lucan*, and St. *Ambroſe*.

Honey and milk are under thy tongue.] This ſignifies the ſame thing; for theſe were anciently the Food of Infants; and may denote that the Church hath inſtruction for all ſorts. So wide from the truth is the Expoſition of the Doctors in *Maimonides* (*porta Moſis*, p. 83.) that this Milk and Honey being ſaid to lie under the tongue, ſignifies the concealment of ſuch truths as are very ſweet, till men be fit to receive them.

The ſmell of thy Garments.] *Garments*, wherewith we are clothed, ſignifie, in the New Teſtament, our whole Converſation: and their *Perfume* therefore denotes only the excellency of the Chriſtian life; but its being known alſo every where.

Like the ſmell of Lebanon.] From the Trees in the Foreſt of *Lebanon* came many ſweet ſpices; particularly Frankincenſe; from which ſome think it took its name of *Lebanon*; though others think rather from *laban*, white, becauſe of the Snow that lay perpetually upon the top of this Mountain.

[m] *V.* 12. *A Garden incloſed*,] in the Foreſt about this Mountain *Lebanon*, *Solomon* built himſelf an houſe; which we find deſcribed, 1 *Kings* VII. 2, &c. unto which, no doubt, there belonged a Garden, with Springs, and Fountains, or Receptacles of Water; and all ſorts of Trees, and Plants, and Flowers, that might make it delightful. Unto which, I conceive, he hath reſpect in this, and in the following Verſes.

I know that very good Authors think he here deſcribes a perfect Virgin; *like a Garden newly incloſed, in which no Seed hath been ſown*; as the Doctors ſpeak in *Perke Eliezer*, Cap. 21. which hath made ſome Chriſtian Writers apply this to the care of the Church, to preſerve her ſelf pure and undefiled, &c. But it is more agreeable to what goes before, and follows after, to expound it as *Theodoret* doth of the Church bringing forth not only the fruits of Godlineſs and Vertue; but all ſorts and variety of Fruit: like an excellent Garden: and therefore guarded by the ſingular Care and Providence of her Lord and Owner, from Tyrants and Hereticks; who like wild Beaſts, or Thieves would deſtroy or deflower her.

A ſpring ſhut up, &c.] The ſame meaning hath a *Spring ſhut up, and a Fountain ſealed*; that the Waters may be preſerved from dirt and filth: which cannot be thrown or fall into them, to trouble them and make them muddy, when they are ſo ſecured; but they flow purely. And, indeed, in the Prophetical Language the flouriſhing condition of the Church, after it hath been in affliction, is ſet forth by the planting of a Wilderneſs, with all ſorts of the beſt Trees; and by making Fountains break forth, and Waters flow therein, XLI. Iſai. 18, 19. LI. 2.

The LXX (according to the *Vatican* Copy, and that which *Theodoret* follows) and the *Vulgar* Latin, take the ſecond compariſon here, to

be

be the ſame with the firſt; reading it thus, *A Garden encloſed is my Siſter, my Spouſe, a Garden encloſed*, &c. (juſt like *v.* 9. and *v.* 11.) reading, it ſeems, in the Hebrew, *Gan* a Garden, where we now read *Gal* a Spring. But this doth not at all alter the ſenſe, and therefore need not trouble the Reader.

It is poſſible that in the laſt Words of the Verſe, a *Fountain ſealed*, there may be a deſcription of the Chriſtian *Font*, or Baptiſm: to which none were admitted, but ſuch as ſincerely renounced all wickedneſs; reſolving and promiſing to lead a holy Life. Which ſenſe *Theodoret* may be thought to have expreſſed, when he ſaith, the Church is compared to a *Fountain ſealed*, ὡς μὴ πᾶσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀξίοις προσκεκλῶ, as not lying expoſed to all Comers, but only to thoſe who are worthy. Though his next Words ſeem to confine this Paſſage to the Myſteries, in the other Sacrament of Chriſt's Body and Blood. Which they only that are already initiated in the Chriſtian Church can partake of; and not all they neither: but ſuch only as do not after their initiation wallow again in filthineſs; but live accurately, or purifie themſelves by repentance, if they fall into any ſin.

St. *Cyprian* makes uſe of this Verſe, to prove the *Unity of the Church*; not only in his Book upon that Subject, but in ſeveral of his Epiſtles; ſaying, *If the Church be a Garden encloſed, and a Fountain ſealed; how can any man enter into that Garden, or drink of that* Fountain who is not in the Church! *&c. v. Epiſt.* 69, 74, 75. *Edit.* Oxon.

Cotovicus, in his *Itinerary*, ſays that there is a Fountain three Miles from *Bethlehem* Southward, called by this name of *Fountain ſealed*: to which he went, and was told, that water ſtill runs from thence in Pipes to the place where *Solomon*'s Temple ſtood. But he himſelf intimates, that herein he follows an uncertain report.

[*n*] *V.* 13. *Thy plants*, &c.] By theſe *Schelachim*, *young Plants*, or *Shoots* and *Cions* (as the Word ſignifies) we may well underſtand thoſe whom the Apoſtle calls νεόφυτοι, who had newly received Chriſtianity: and are here repreſented as a goodly *Nurſery of Pomegranates*. A Fruit in that Country very delicious, and no leſs uſeful many ways: for it was of a grateful ſmell, and had a winy Juice, very refreſhing; and therefore much deſired in thoſe hot places. *Theodoret* alſo thinks that hereby is ſet forth, the great variety of Chriſtians in the Church; or as his Words are, *the many Orders of Chriſtians that ſhall be ſaved*. For there is one Order of *Virgins*; another of *Widows*; another of *married People*; as there are alſo, *rich* and *poor*, *Maſters* and *Servants*, &c. who all have their ſeveral places and ſtations in one and the ſame Church; as the Grains of the Pomegranates lie in their ſeveral *Cells*, and diſtinct *Cloſets* (as they may be called) and yet are all contained in the ſame Shell; and all compoſe one Body.

Camphire] Of *Copher*, which we tranſlate *Camphire*; ſee Chap. I. v. 14. Where it is joined with *Nard*, as it is here. Of which (i. e. of *Nard*) there were ſeveral kinds; and therefore a Word of the *Plural* Number is here uſed; as a Word of the *Singular* in the beginning of the next Verſe: which we in Engliſh expreſs, by the ſame Word *Spikenard* in both places.

[*o*] *V.* 14. *Saffron, Calamus*, &c.] Moſt of the names of theſe fragrant Shrubs or Trees which we read in the Hebrew Text, are the very ſame with thoſe now in uſe in our, and moſt other Languages. The firſt of them *Carcom* (*Saffron*) being not much different from *Crocus*, from whence that Mountain in *Cilicia* called *Corycus* had its name; where the beſt *Crocus* in the World then grew. The next *Canna* (which we tranſlate *Calamus*) is a ſweet *Cane* or Reed. *Cinnamon* alſo retains the ſame name: as do *Myrrh* (which grew only in the midſt of *Arabia* among the *Sabæans*) and *Aloes*, which dropt from a Shurb in thoſe Countries; and was reckoned among the *prime Spices*, as the laſt Words of this Verſe are very well tranſlated.

Chief Spices.] In the Hebrew the Words are *the top* or *the head of Aromaticks*: which ſignifies the moſt excellent Spices. Juſt as the *top of Myrrh*, XXX. *Exod.* 23. ſignifies the beſt and pureſt Myrrh; and the *top* or *head of Oil*, CXLI. Pſal. 1. the moſt excellent Oil. I ſhall only note farther, that *Frankincenſe*, *Myrrh*, *Calamus*, *Cinnamon* (call'd there κιννάμωμον) are thus joined together by an ancient Poet in *Athenæus*, L. IX. Cap. 15. Where *Mneſimachus*, in a Poem of his called *Hippotrophos*, making a deſcription of a great Supper, which was a Marriage Feaſt; ſaith at the end of it,

Ὀσμὴ σεμνὴ μυκτῆρας ἔτυπτε
Λιβάνου, μάκερ (it ſhould be κάλαμε I ſuppoſe) σμύρνης
&c.

Where σεμνὴ (the attribute of *ſmell*) which we commonly tranſlate *venerable*; and is ſo rendred in the ancient *Gloſſary*, ſignifies *moſt excellent*. For by that Word the LXX tranſlate the Hebrew *negidim*, VIII. *Prov.* 6. *excellent* or *princely things*. And ſo noble was the ſmell which the Spices gave, that the Poet ſaith it *ſhaked the Noſtrils*, i. e. ſtrongly affected them: and ſtirred up in the Brain a brisk ſenſe of pleaſure.

I do not think fit to ſeek for any thing in the Church, particularly anſwering to every one of theſe excellent Spices, as Interpreters do: but look upon them only, as repreſenting in general the incomparable Vertues of the Church; and its acceptableneſs unto God. Or, that there are in the Church all things neceſſary to ſalvation: for rare Unguents, and other Compoſitions, were made of the Bloſſoms, Fruit, or Seeds of theſe Shrubs: conducing much to health and long life.

[*p*] *V.* 15. *A fountain of gardens*, &c.] This Verſe *Theodoret* judiciouſly connects with the foregoing; after this manner: Ἐκεῖ ἡ ὕλη, *and it* (i. e. this *Paradiſe* or *Orchard*, as we tranſlate it) *hath alſo a Fountain*.

A Fountain of Gardens, and Well of living Water,] are the ſame thing; as *Bochartus* hath obſerved in his *Canaan*, L. I. C. 18. Where he

ſhows that *Beer* which we tranſlate *Pit* or *Well*, ſignifies a Fountain, as much a *Maajan*. *Libanus* abounds with ſuch Springs (as all great Mountains do) and particularly there is at the foot of it, an excellent Spring, which grows preſently into a River; that waters the whole Plain between that and *Tripolis*, with a good Stream; whereby the Vineyards, Olive-yards, Fig-yards, and Gardens, which there were very numerous, were all ſupplied. Unto which *Theodoret* compares the *Evangelical* Doctrine (according to that of our Bleſſed Saviour's IV. *John* 10, 14.) only he adds alſo the *Law*; making *Fountain* and *Well* in this Verſe, two diſtinct things; and by the latter imagining the Law to be denoted; becauſe things lay there deep and ſecret, as in a Pit.

[q] *V.* 16. *Awake, O North-Wind,* &c.] The ſame great Perſon thinks the *North-Wind* is here commanded to ariſe, merely that it might be gone (as being pernicious to Fruit) and give place to the *South-wind*, which is only invited to *come* and *blow upon the Garden*, with its ſoft, gentle, and benign breath. But moſt Interpreters take it otherways: And ſome imagine that theſe two, being the moſt vehement Winds in thoſe Countries, are called upon to *blow*; that by their ſtrong ſhaking of the Aromatick Plants, they might make them ſend forth their odours the more plentifully. But it ſeems more reaſonable to think, that theſe two Winds were moſt profitable in their turns, for theſe two purpoſes. *Firſt*, the *North-wind* was uſeful to cloſe the Pores of the Trees, and ſhut up their Effluviums; that they might not ſpend themſelves too much, and be exhauſted by perpetual evaporation. And then the *South-wind* coming in due ſeaſon, opened and relaxed them again: making the Aromatick Gums drop freely; and the ſweet odours fly more actively abroad.

And if this Garden to which *Solomon* here alludes, had the ſame ſituation, which the Maps and Charts give to that at *Jeruſalem* (which they place on the Eaſt-ſide of the City, having the Wall on the Weſt) theſe two Winds here mentioned, were thoſe, which alone were deſirable. The *Eaſt* being biting and blaſting not only in *Egypt*, XLI. *Gen.* 6. but in *Judea* alſo, XIX. *Ezek.* 12. and in *Aſſyria*, IV *Jonah* 8. And therefore they defended their Fruits againſt it, that they might not be expoſed to it.

Let my beloved come, &c.] There is no doubt but this concluſion of the Chapter, is the voice of the *Spouſe*; praying her Beloved to favour and proſper his own Plantation, for his ſake as well as for hers: that he might not loſe what He himſelf had deſigned, and ſo happily begun and ſettled in ſuch beautiful Order; but take the pleaſure of ſeeing it grow to perfection.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

The firſt Verſe belonging (as was ſaid before in the Argument of the fourth *Chapter) to the foregoing repreſentation; a new one begins, ver.* 2. *which continuing to the end of this Chapter, makes the* fifth *part of this* Paſtoral. *Wherein is repreſented how ſoon our Spirits flag, and grow weary of the moſt heavenly delights; nay, how drowſie the beſt minds ſometimes are, and how inſenſible of God's love. For the* Spouſe *is introduced* (*v.* 2, 3.) *as in a ſlumber; and not ſo ready, as formerly, to comply with his gracious motions. At which the* Bridegroom *takes not ſuch diſtaſte, as to leave her in that dulneſs; but awakes her out of it, to ſuch a lively ſenſe of her negligence, that ſhe applies her ſelf to ſeek his favour with greater earneſtneſs than ever, ver.* 4, 5, 6. *The ſenſe of which, though ſhe could not preſently recover* (*ver.* 6, 7, 8.) *yet ſhe expreſſeth the greateſt paſſion for him, and the higheſt admiration of him: in a rare deſcription which ſhe makes* (*ver.* 10. *to the end of the Chapter*) *of his beauteous excellencies and perfections.*

Bridegroom.

Verſe 1. I *Am come into my garden, my ſiſter,* my *ſpouſe; I have gathered my myrrh with my ſpice, I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drank my wine with my milk: eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*] I am well pleaſed to ſee the fruitfulneſs of my Garden, and therefore have not denied thy requeſt, my tenderly Beloved Spouſe; but am preſent in it, and have brought it to ſuch perfection that it hath produced many exeellent perſons, more precious than Myrrh, and all the Spices beforenamed: with whoſe ſervices I am not only well pleaſed, but rejoice in the purity of their Doctrine; and of their lives; inviting all that bear any love to me, both in Heaven and in Earth, to rejoice and to be exceeding glad together with me. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 2. *I ſleep, but my heart waketh:* it is *the voice of my beloved that knocketh, ſaying, Open to me, my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew,* and *my locks with the drops of the night.*] I heard theſe gracious words, though I was not perfectly awake, and knew it was his voice, and not the voice of a Stranger (X. *Joh.* 5.) which called upon me, and that with importunity (III. *Rev.* 20.) ſaying, Give me free admiſſion into thy beſt affections; why doſt thou delay, who art ſo very dear to me, ſo intirely beloved by me, who haſt conſented to love me above all things, and to keep thy ſelf holy and undefiled by loving me alone: which I have long deſired; and taking much pains, and indured great hardſhips to win thy love. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?*] But ſo ſtupidly dull and drowſie was I at this time, that I did not anſwer his kindneſs, as it deſerved: but made unmannerly excuſes, and deſired I might not be diſturbed, now that I was taking my repoſe, and could not without difficulty leave my Bed, and my beloved reſt; the ſweetneſs of which I had begun to taſte. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.*] And yet ſuch is the kindneſs of Him who is worthy of all love, He did not preſently

ly leave me to my self, but first raised me out of my slumber, by letting me know He was not well pleased with me; and making me sensible of the danger of such delays: which put me in such a commotion, that I was in great anguish of mind, and even quivered and shaked with fear, and grief, and sorrow. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *I rose up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped* with *myrrh, and my fingers* with *sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.*] Whereby I was not quite dejected; but only excited to shake off my sloth, and to make the more haste to acknowledge his Goodness, and embrace his gracious motions to me: unto which I applied my self with zealous endeavours, resolving to entertain Him with the most ardent love, and with the highest expressions of my esteem of Him and of his favour. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.*] But, though I thus repented of my negligence; yet, see the lamentable effects thereof; for when I had thus disposed my heart, and set it wide open to receive his Commands, my Beloved had withdrawn his gracious presence, and was gone quite away out of my sight: Which made me even sink down and die with fear, that I should not recover Him again; especially when I called to mind those many words of Grace, wherewith he made his addresses to me; calling me (v. 2.) his Sister, his Love, his Dove, his undefiled: with which I was now affected too late; for I sought Him diligently, but could not find Him; I beseeched and entreated Him to return, but received no Answer from Him. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *The watchmen that went about the city, found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.*] This, though it was very bitter to me, yet, did not utterly discourage me, but still I continued to seek Him every where, as I had done heretofore (III. 3.) but they who formerly instructed me, and directed me unto Him, now fell upon me with grievous reproofs, nay, reproaches for my fault; which cut me to the very heart: nay, they whose Office it was to preserve the City of God in peace and safety, exposed me to open shame, and the foulest disgrace. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.*] So I turned my self to those of my Neighbours and familiar Acquaintance, who were awakened by my cries to come and see what the matter was; and conjured them, as they would answer it to God, that if they met with my Beloved, they would let Him know—— what shall I say? what shall I desire you to tell Him? but that I do not enjoy my self, now that I want his Company: nor can be well, till I recover his love again. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 9. ¶ *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?*] And some of them had so much compassion upon me as to interest themselves so far in my sorrows, as to enquire into the cause of them: and how they might be assistant unto me in their cure: for they ask'd me, Wherein doth thy beloved excel other excellent persons? He is very lovely, no doubt, because beloved of thee, who art the most amiable of all other Women; but what is his preheminence, wherein do those, who are worthy of the greatest love, fall short of Him? that thou art thus sollicitous about Him, and layest such a severe charge upon us, to assist thee in thy search of Him. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. *My beloved* is *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*] To whom I replied, My Beloved, is that great Son of *David*, of whom you have heard: who is of a Princely form, having admirable Beauty and Sweetness mixed with equal Majesty and Brightness; dazling the eyes of those that behold Him; chosen by God to do the greatest things; and bring all Nations into his obedience. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *His head* is as *the most fine gold, his locks* are *bushy, and black as a raven.*] And therefore wears a Crown of pure Gold upon his head: from whence his curled Locks hang down upon his brow; which are of such a shining black, that they add an excellent Grace and Greatness to his Royal Beauty. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. *His eyes* are *as* the eyes *of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk,* and *fitly set.*] His eyes are sparkling; and yet mild; like those of milk-white Doves, when they are highly delighted, as they sit by the Rivers side; or other places where there is abundance of water. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Ver. 13. *His cheeks* are *as a bed of spices,* as *sweet flowers: his lips* like *lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.*] The lovely Down also upon his Cheeks is no less grateful; rising there like Spices, when they first appear out of their Beds; or like the young Buds of Aromatick Flowers in the Paradise before-described: where the Purple Lilies are not more beautiful than his Lips; from whence flow Words more precious and more pleasant, than the richest and most fragrant Myrrh. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Ver. 14. *His hands* are as *gold rings set with the beryl: his belly* is as *bright ivory overlaid* with *sapphires.*] And as He hath the Majesty of a Prince, so He hath the compassion of a Priest: and therefore cloathed with such a Vest as the High-Priest wears, when he ministers before God, and is adorned with the Ephod unto which the Breast-plate, with all its precious Gems, is constantly annexed. *See* Annot. [*o*].

Ver. 15. *His legs* are as *pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars.*] His Thighs also are covered with fine Linen, which makes them look like Pillars of the whitest Marble; over which the holy Robe is thrown, with golden Bells at the bottom of them: all which are so contrived for Beauty and Glory, that his aspect, when He appears in these flowred Vestments, is no less stately and great, than the Forest of *Lebanon*; whose goodly Cedars do not more excel all other Trees, than He doth all other men. *See* Annot. [*p*].

Ver.

Ver. 16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This* is *my beloved, and this* is *my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*] So you would say, as well as I, if you did but hear Him speak, or if He did but breathe upon you; and, to say all in one word, there is nothing wanting to make him the Desire of all Nations; nor any thing in Him, but what is desirable: and therefore do not wonder, O ye Daughters of *Jerusalem*, that I am thus concerned about Him, and restless till I find Him; for this is the true Portraicture of my Beloved, this is the Character of Him, who by owning me for such, gives me leave to call Him, My Friend. *See* Annot. [q].

ANNOTATIONS.

[a] *Verse* 1.] Unto that invitation, which is made by the Spouse in the latter end of the foregoing Chapter, the Bridegroom here gives an answer: and testifies his acceptance, by coming to taste the Fruit of his Garden, nay, to make a Feast in it; of which He calls his Friends and Companions, after the manner of those Countries, to be partakers. His receiving Fruit from his Garden is expressed in these Words, *I have gathered my Myrrh*, with the rest of the Spices mentioned in the former Chapter. Then follows the Feast, (which they always made when they gathered the Fruits of the Earth) in these Words, *I have eaten my Honey-comb with my Honey*, &c. Which is put instead of all other things, because it was one of the greatest entertainments of those Countries. As appears from hence, that it was among the Presents sent to *Joseph* when Viceroy of *Egypt*, XLIII. *Gen.* 11. and brought to *David* by the Great men of the Country, as part of his Provision, while he dwelt among them in his Banishment, 2 *Sam.* XVII. 29. and is mentioned also by *Homer* as the entertainment which *Hecamede* gave *Nestor* and *Patroclus*; before whom she set *green* or *fresh Honey*.

And as that comprehends all Royal Dainties that were to be eaten, so *Wine* and *Milk* all the Liquors at the Feast: whereby is represented the Joy He took in the Fruit of his Garden. In which joy he would have all good men, and Angels themselves (XV. *Luke* 7. 10.) to participate in the highest measure; that their joy, as our Lord speaks, might be full. For that's the meaning of *Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O Beloved.*

I have not adventured to be very particular in specifying the things, to which these expressions may be applied; but have only mentioned the Evangelical Doctrine, and the Good Works of Christians. If by *Myrrh and Spices*, any special thing be designed, I should think it is the *Martyrs*; who offered up themselves most acceptable Sacrifices unto Christ, and made greater joy in Heaven, than the mere repentance of a Sinner could do. And the joy that Christ took in such victorious Souls, as laid down their lives for Him, nay, did but heartily entertain his Doctrine; is expressed by their feasting with Him, III. *Revel.* 20. The last Words, *Eat, O Friends, drink*, &c. may soberly be applied to the *Eucharist*: where we feast with Christ on his Sacrifice, and He feasts with us, beholdidg our love to Him and one to another.

[b] *V.* 2.] Here now begins a new *Scene* or Part of this Pastoral Song. Wherein *Solomon* represents himself as having lost that clear sight of the Messiah, which he had in the foregoing Vision, Chap. III. 4. (for they could not always keep up their minds to such a pitch of contemplation.) But falling into a trance, thought he heard his voice (though he saw not his person) speaking to his Spouse. Whom *Solomon* conceives to be in the same condition, wherein he then was himself; and to hear those Words spoken, *v.* 1. between sleeping and waking. So the first Words of this Verse signifies, *I sleep, but my heart waketh*: the same with those of *Baalam*, XXIV. *Numb.* 4. *falling* (asleep) *but having my eyes open.* In which condition the Greeks describe their *Saturn*; of whom they say, κοιμώμενον ἶδεν καὶ ἐγρηγορὼς ἐκοιμήθη, *sleeping he saw, and waking he slept.*

She having therefore but an imperfect sense of his kindness to her, and presence with her, he awakens her to attend more lively to his love; which He was desirous more fully to discover; and therefore calls upon her by more names of endearment than ever. For here are *four* put together, the following rising still higher than the foregoing. And he represents (after the manner of Lovers) what he had suffered to gain her affection: which seems to me to be the meaning of the last Words, *My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* Wherein He is represented as a beautiful *Nazarite*, having bushy Hair, and many Locks (as *Sampson* had) who having travelled all night to visit her, was thereby very wet. For there were two sorts of Dew; the *Morning Dew* which was soon gone, VI. *Hosea* 4. XIII. 3. and that *Dew which fell in the Night*, and lay long, and wet those who were in it very much: Whereby is signified in Scripture, hardships and great afflictions, IV. *Dan.* 25. There are those indeed who by *Dew* understand the Evangelical Doctrine, by which innumerable Souls were begotten unto Christ, as *David* prophesied, CX. *Psal.* 3. But this is not agreeable to what follows; and their reason for this Exposition is not true, that *Dew* is always taken in a good sense: for I have shewn the contrary; and *the dropping* of the Prophets (a Metaphor taken from *Dew*) is their Prophesying *against a place*, and threatning Judgments to come upon it, XXI. *Ezek.* 2. VI. *Amos* 16. which makes me think that *Solomon* here rather alludes to the last Verse of the CXth Psalm (if he had that Psalm in his eye) which predicts the troubles and afflictions of the Messiah, *by drinking of the Brook in the way.*

If this Exposition of this difficult Verse be not allowed, it may be supposed that the *Messiah* is here represented as coming in the person and condition of a poor man, to beg entertainment, and having not any where to lay his

his head (as our Lord ſpeaks) was thereby expoſed to the cold Air, &c. Which will make this a commendation of Charity to the Church; ſhewing alſo the danger of neglecting it.

[c] *V.* 3.] And then this Verſe agrees perfectly with what we read in the Parable, XI. *Luke* 7. Where the good man of the houſe was unwilling to be troubled, even by his Friend, that came to beg his aſſiſtance, when he was going to compoſe himſelf to reſt. But I take it to be a deſcription of the dulneſs, which is ſometimes apt to creep upon the moſt excellent minds: who, in ſome tempers, are ſo liſtleſs as not to be much affected with the beſt motions that are made to them. Of which infirmity *Solomon* having had many Examples in the Hiſtory of his own Nation, might well conceive the Spouſe her ſelf to be backward to entertain the Grace which was offered to her.

There are no difficulties in the Words; which ſignifie plainly, that ſhe having compoſed her ſelf to reſt, and being half aſleep, was unwilling to be diſturbed. For going into Bed, ſhe had put off her Clothes and waſhed her Feet; as the manner was, that no filth, which they had contracted in the day-time, (they wearing Sandals only, not Shoes as we do) might foul the Sheets: and it would have been a trouble to do all this over again; which is the meaning of the laſt Words, *How ſhall I defile them? i. e.* I cannot eaſily perſuade myſelf to it.

I ſhall only therefore ſet down the pious Note of *Theodoret* upon theſe Words: "Let us learn "from hence, what miſchief Sloth and Lazi- "neſs doth, and in what troubles and pains "it engages us. For the Spouſe here excu- "ſing herſelf, and not being willing preſent- "ly to riſe to the Bridegroom, is compelled "a little while after, not only to riſe and run "down to the door, but to run through the "City, and wander about the Streets, and fall "among the Watchmen, and by them to be "wounded; and after all could ſcarce find her "Beloved: to whom if ſhe had preſently "hearkned, and obeyed his heavenly call, ſhe "had avoided all theſe inconveniencies.

There are thoſe, not only among us, but alſo, in the Romiſh Church, who apply all this lazineſs to the State of the Church after the time of the Great *Conſtantine*. For which I ſee no warrant; but think we may rather apply it to thoſe Churches, who, preſently after our Saviour's departure to Heaven, left their firſt Love, and grew cold, as we read in the *ſecond* and *third* Chapters of the *Revelation*. For it ſeems probable, by the ſixth Chapter of this Book in the beginning of it, that here he ſpeaks of particular Societies, not of the whole Body of the Church.

[d] *V.* 4.] Yet, ſuch is the infinite Goodneſs of the Divine Nature, he immediately repreſents the Meſſiah, as not provoked by this neglect, wholly to caſt off his Spouſe: but rather ſtretching forth his hand to awaken her out of this Security. For ſo it follows, *He put in his hand by the hole*; i. e. at the *Window*, or *Caſement*; as if he would draw her out of her Bed: or, as it may be interpreted, in a threatning manner, to puniſh her for her ſloth. For ſo *putting forth the hand* ſignifies, to do ſome execution, 1 *Sam.* XXVI. 9, 11, 23. Which agrees with what follows, that preſently ſhe was mightily moved thereby, and more than awakened, being full of ſolicitude, and fear, and grief, and trouble. Which ſhows indeed, that ſhe did not intend to deny, but only to delay Him: and yet He took this ſo ill, as to put her in great fear of ſome danger from it (as our Saviour doth in his Letters to the Churches, II. *Revel.* 5, 16, 22, 23, &c.) For the Word *Bowels* ſignifies the Affections, and Paſſions; and the Hebrew Word *hamu*, which we tranſlate, *was moved*, ſignifies *made a noiſe*, or *was tumultuous*: and therefore denotes the paſſion of trouble and grief, and of fear alſo; nay, of great fear and perplexity. For ſo St. *Hierom* here renders it, *My Belly trembled*; as he doth in VII. *Ezek.* 16. where it is applied to Doves (to whom the Spouſe was here compared, *ver.* 2.) and we tranſlate it *mourning*; but it ſhould be rather *trembling like Doves*. For that is their nature, XI. *Hoſea* 11. all Authors obſerving them to be exceeding timorous: and therefore ſo it may be tranſlated here, *I was ſo full of trouble, that I quivered like a Dove.*

Others by *putting forth the hand*, underſtand the touches he gives by his Holy Spirit: which doth not contradict what I have ſaid; threatnings being employed by Him for that purpoſe.

[e] *V.* 5.] And having had this glance of Him (whoſe voice only ſhe heard before, v. 2.) ſhe ſtarts up immediately, and endeavours to correct her error. And is here repreſented as making ſuch haſte to open the door, that ſhe broke the Veſſel of Myrrh, which ſhe ſnatcht up, when ſhe roſe; intending therewith to anoint, and refreſh his head, which was wet with Dew. Or rather her hands ſhaked in that panick fear wherein ſhe was: and ſo ſhe ſpilt ſome of the Myrrh, and it ran about her Fingers. By which is denoted the great ſpeed ſhe made to ſhake off her ſloth, now ſhe ſaw her danger; and the fear that came upon her, leſt ſhe ſhould loſe her Beloved: to whom ſhe now reſolved to expreſs the greateſt affection imaginable. For it was not barely *Myrrh* (which was one of the moſt excellent Spices XIX. *John* 39.) but the moſt *precious Myrrh* which ſhe took up to carry to Him. So *mor ober* ſignifies; which we well tranſlate *ſweet ſmelling Myrrh*: but, word for word, is *current Myrrh*. Either in that ſenſe wherein Money is called current, XXIII. *Gen.* 16. as ſome fanſie; or, as *Raſi* thinks, becauſe the Spirit, that is, the odour of it, diffuſed it ſelf round about the place where it was; that is, was exceeding fragrant: or, as *Bochart* will have it, was that which *wept* (as they ſpeak) and drope from the Tree of it ſelf; which as it was the moſt unctuous, ſo was the richeſt and beſt for all manner of uſes. See his *Phaleg.* L. II. C. 22. And beſides this *Theophraſtus* obſerves, that out of Myrrh, being beaten, there flowed an Oil, called *ſtacte*, which was very precious: as I find in *Athenæus* L. XV. C. 11.

And accordingly the *Chaldee* and *Aquila* translate *aber* in this place, *choice* Myrrh; *Symmachus* πρωτίστην, the *prime*, from whom the *Vulgar*, the *most approved Myrrh*.

[f] *V.* 6.] But notwithstanding her repentance, she was thus far punished for her sloth, that her Beloved absented himself from her, for a time: and she could not hear the least tidings from Him, or notice of Him. Which cast her into such an excess of grief and fear, that she swooned away, and was like a dead Body (so that Phrase, *my Soul went forth*, signifies to die, XXXV. *Gen.* 18. XLII. 28. and other places.) And recovering her self again was extremely troubled, by the reflections she made upon his kindness, and her insensibleness of it. For which she ask'd his pardon, and sought his favour; but could receive no tokens of it.

[g] *V.* 7.] I take *Watchmen* here in a good sense, as before (III. 3.) unto which I refer the Reader. And only observe, that *to find* a person, signifies sometimes in Scripture Phrase, as much as to fall upon him, as we speak; and that on a sudden, I. *Judg.* 5. XXI. *Ps.* 8. CXIX. 143. X. *Isai.* 10. And so I have expounded it here; and referred the smiting and wounding her, to the reproaches they cast upon her. For there is a smiting with the tongue, as well as with the hand; and that not only by Enemies unjustly, XVIII. *Jer.* 18. but by Friends out of love and charity, CXLI. *Psal.* 5. For there is not a greater kindness, than sometimes even to upbraid us with our faults. Which is farther expressed by *taking away her Veil* from her; as much as to say, exposing her to shame: a Veil being thrown over Womens faces for modesty-sake, as well as in token of subjection, XX. *Gen.* 16. And so St. *Hierom* in his Epistle to *Læta*, takes this *Veil* or *Pallium*, as he calls it, to be *pudicitiæ signum*, a sign of chastity: and therefore to take it away, was to represent her as an impudent, whorish Woman. *Greg. Nyssen* adds that it was σεμνότατον κόσμημα (Hom. XII. upon this Book) the Nuptial Veil: which, together with the face, covered the whole Body: and therefore to be distrobed of it was the greater reproach; because it was to disown her to be his Spouse, as she professed her self.

[h] *V.* 8.] This Verse is very plain, expressing the Admirable temper of a true Penitent: who leaves nothing unattempted to recover the favour of her Lord (for finding no comfort from the Watchmen, she implores the help of all good people) and yet doth not complain of what she suffered, nor of the harshness of those, who should have help'd to relieve her; and not dealt so severely with her (according to that of the Apostle, VI. *Gal.* 1.) but only bewails the loss of his presence, and represents that, notwithstanding, she had not lost her Love to Him; but rather that it was so great, she could not live without Him.

It must be confessed that there is no necessity of reading those Words which we translate, *that ye tell him*, by an Interrogation, *What will you tell him?* as the Hebrew seems to import (for the Particle *mah* doth not always denote that) but it adds much to the Life of the speech, and represents her passion to the heighth, if we so translate it; as I have taken it in the Paraphrase.

[i] *V.* 9.] In this Verse the Daughters of *Jerusalem* reply to her; and being touched with a pitiful concern for her (whose admirable beauty discovered it self to them, in this wretched condition wherein they saw her) they desire to have a Character of her Beloved: that they might be the better able to know Him, if they met Him; and be the more excited to help her to seek for Him, when they understood his deserts.

[k] *V.* 10.] In this part of the Character, which now follows of Him, *Solomon* seems to me to have had his eye upon the Person of his Father *David*, I *Sam.* XVI. 12. whose very aspect promised much, and shewed that he was born to rule. And whether we translate the first Words, *white and ruddy*, as in our Bible; or as *Bocharius*, *white and shining*, or *glistering* (making *adom* not to signify *ruber*, but *rutilus*, and the whole to be as much as *summe candidus*, exceeding fair and of a pure complexion) it matters not. For it only signifies, in my opinion, the majestick beauty of his Aspect: which *David* himself had also described in those famous words, XLV. Psal. 2 *Thou art fairer than the children of men.* And then, in the latter part of this Verse, he hath respect, as I take it, both to what they sang of his Father *David*, after he came from his Victory over *Goliath*, I Sam. XVIII. 7. and to what *David* himself sang of this great Prince in that XLVth Psalm 3, 4, &c. and more largely, CXth Psalm 2, 3, 5, 6. which all relate to the Conquest of the World unto Him: and is signified in this expression of his being *chief* (or *lifting up the Standard*) *over ten thousands*; that is, over great Multitudes or Armies, III. *Psalm* 6. The LXX translate it, *Chosen out of ten thousand*: unto which I have had respect also in the Paraphrase. As for mystical Significations; some think by *white and ruddy* is meant his Divine and Human Nature; others, only his Humanity, &c. (as may be found in Interpreters) but I have not dared to meddle with them. And shall but just mention the fancy of the *Cabbalists*, who understand hereby the effects He works in us. For sometimes He dispenseth Himself in Mercy and Kindness; and then, say they, He is *white*: sometimes in the zeal of Justice, and with Anger; and then He is *red*.

[l] *V.* 11.] Now being thus represented as a King, He is next described as having a Crown upon his Head. So I understand *Cethem*, (which we translate *Gold*) as *Rasi* doth: who takes it for a *Diadem*: and, indeed, in other places of Scripture it signifies some precious Ornament, as XXV. *Prov.* 12. Now this Crown upon the Head is said to be such an one as *David* had mentioned before, XXI. *Psal.* 3. of *pura Gold*. In the *Hebrew* of *Paz*; which *Bocharius* (both in his *Phaleg.* L. II. C. 27. and in his *Canaan*, L. I. C. 46.) shews was the

the Island anciently called *Taprobana*: in which the footsteps of this Word *Paz* remained in *Ptolomy*'s Time. Who mentions in that Island the River *Phasis*; and the Creek, or Bay, *Pasis*.

The same excellent Person, in his Book of Sacred Animals (Par. 2. L. 2. C. 10.) shews that, in the latter part of this Verse, we are to understand by *kevuzoth* (*Locks*) the Foretop, or the Hair coming down the Forehead; which is expressed in the next Word, *taltalim*, hanging down. And this Foretop is only mentioned, because little else appeared, when the Head had the Crown on it.

This Hair is said to be as *black as a Raven*; because such shining black Hair was accounted Majestick, and much affected in those Countries: insomuch that they endeavoured by Art, to make their Hair of this colour; and, as *Pliny* informs us, employed the Eggs, the Blood and the Brain of Ravens for that purpose. They look'd upon this coloured Hair also as a token of courage and fortitude; and with a pure clear complexion, is was very lovely.

There are several Mystical applications made of this: which I had rather the Reader, who hath a mind to them, should seek in others, than find here.

[m] *V.* 12.] The plainest meaning of this Verse, is that of the LXX and Vulgar Latin: which is to the same effect with that I have set down in the Paraphrase. For *washed* and *fitting* do not refer to the *eyes*, but unto *Doves*: who love to *sit*, nay to *tarry* (as the Word imports) by River-sides, and other places which abound with Water; and are then so pleased, that their eyes appear very quick and lively. And such piercing eyes, adding much to Majesty, they are here made a part of this glorious Person's Character.

Washed with milk] signifies *Doves as white as milk*: which are most lovely; and when they have washed themselves, look as if they had been in Milk.

As for the common sense which the Hebrews give of this Verse, and which most modern Interpreters follow: *Bochartus*, in the beginning of his Second Part of *Sacred Animals*, seems to me to have evinced, that the Hebrew Words will not bear it. But it is fit to mention it, and it amounts to this; that his eyes were *clear and white and full set* (or set in perfection, as *Aben Ezra* here interprets the Word *milleth*) like a Diamond or Precious Stone in a Ring: neither too much depressed, nor too prominent; but handsomly filling the Sockets. And if this were the natural Interpretation of the last Phrase, *Yoschebeth al milleth*, sitting or dwelling by fulness or fillings; I should think there might be an allusion to the Precious Stones in the Pectoral of the High Priest, which are said to be *set in their fillings*, XXVIII. Exod. 17, 20. But this Phrase doth not refer, as I said to *eyes*, but to *Doves*, that sit by places abounding with water; or, as *Avenarius* will have it, *ad vas plenum Lacte*, by a Vessel full of Milk.

The mystical application of these eyes to the Doctors of the Church, seems impertinent; because they are described before in the eyes of the Spouse, IV. 1. Rather therefore his exact care and providence over the Church, which nothing can escape, may be hereby represented: for He sees into the very heart and reins as He himself affirms, II. Revel. 18, 23.

[n] *V.* 13.] This Verse is so difficult, that it is a hard matter to give an account of it. The plainest seems to be this; that by *cheeks* we are not to understand those that are smooth; but wherein the hair begins to grow: which added much, in those days, to the goodliness of any man, and was look'd upon as a token of vigour, strength and courage. And it may aptly be compared to the *Flowers*, or the *sproutings* and *buddings* of Plants and Trees. So I understand *Migdaloth* (which we translate *Flowers*) to signifie *Buds*, putting forth like little *Towers*.

The *Lips* may seem unfitly compared to *Lilies*: because white Lips are not beautiful. But *Almanzir* hath observed out of *Dioscorides*, *Theophrastus* and *Pliny*; that there were Lillies of a Purple colour. And besides, I find in *Pliny* (L. XXI. C. 5.) mention made of a Lily, (which he calls *rubens Lilium*; which was much esteemed, he saith, in *Syria*) He shews there also a way how to make Purple Lillies. There are those who think *Solomon* compares the Lips to Lilies, only in regard of their fineness, and delicate softness; thick, blubber-Lips, being very unhandsom, and a sign, also they say, of dulness; and making the speech less graceful. And indeed, Eloquence is sometimes described by Lilies; and may be here meant.

Concerning *sweet smelling Myrrh*, see *v.* 5.

And thus far we have only the description of an amiable, gracious Majesty: which is much advanced by a sweet voice and eloquent speech. The mention of which, may well put us in mind of what is said of our Saviour, IV. *Luke* 22. compared with XLV. *Psal.* 2.

[o] *V.* 14.] If we understand the first Part of this Verse to be meant of the hands, it is thus to be interpreted, *He hath Golden Rings in his Fingers* (as before he is said, v. 11. to have a golden Head, i. e. *a Crown of Gold* upon it) *set with the Chrysolith*, as *Tarsis* (which the LXX here do not translate) it is most probable signifies. And then the latter part of the Verse sounds thus, word for word; *his Belly is of polished Ivory, covered with Sapphire*: i. e. is purely white streaked with blue Veins. But, who sees not that the this be ingenious, yet it is not true? For the Body is no where *covered* (as the Word here is) with Veins: which must needs signifie more than *streaked here* and there. And besides, it is not only against the Rules of decency, but against the very scope of this Discourse, to fancie that any of those naked Parts of the Body are here described, which are not commonly exposed to every Bodies view. For the Spouse is desired to tell, by what marks this person might be discovered, v. 9. now he could not be known by any of those parts which lie concealed

ceaſed and hidden from all mens eyes, being induſtriouſly covered. And therefore no ſuch hidden parts are here repreſented; becauſe He could not thereby be known and diſtinguiſhed.

I conclude therefore, that now ſhe proceeds to deſcribe the habit of this Great Perſon. And *Solomon* having in his mind the *Idea* which his Father had given him of the Meſſiah, in the CXth *Pſalm*, (where He is ſaid to be a Prieſt as well as a Prince) repreſents Him in the habit of the High Prieſt. Who, among other noble Veſtments, had an *Embroidred Coat*; the *Sleeves* of which, the Hebrews tell us, came down to his very Wriſts; nay, as *Maimonides* ſaith, as far as to the hollow of his hand. Which I take to be here meant by *his hands* (which comprehend the *Arms* and *Shoulders*) that is, the clothing of thoſe Parts. And theſe *Sleeves*, as well as the whole Coat, were *embroidered* (as you read, XXVIII. *Exod.* 4.) to make the High Prieſt appear the more glorious. And if you ask what this *Embroidery* was, the Hebrews tell us, that part of it conſiſted in a kind of *oilet holes*, finely wrought. And *R. Solomon Jarchi* expreſly ſaith upon that Text, that *they were holes made in gold Rings, in which were fixed Precious Stones*, &c. (as is afterward ſaid of the Stones of the Ephod, *v.* 11.) Which ſo fully explains theſe Words, *His hands are as Gold Rings, ſet with the Beryl*, that I need ſeek no farther. Though I have ſometimes thought, that the *Ephod* it ſelf might be here intended: which being faſtned upon the *Shoulders* (which in order, after the head, eyes, cheeks and lips, come to be here deſcribed, and are comprehended, as I ſaid before, under the name of *his hand*) hung down before and behind to the bottom of the back: and had *two gold Rings*, unto which the Breaſt-plate was faſtned, as we read XXVIII. *Exod.* 27, 28. *Maimonides* ſaith it had *four* Rings: two above, at the Jewel-Buttons; and two below, about the Girdle of the *Ephod*. Which was one of the principal Ornaments of the High Prieſt, when He miniſtred; the other, and the greateſt of all, was the *Breaſtplate* here unto annexed; and, as they ſay, was to be inſeparable from the Ephod.

Now this *Breaſt-plate* is meant, as I take it, in the latter part of this Verſe. Where under that Word which we tranſlate *Belly*, and properly ſignifies *Bowels*, is comprehended the *Breaſt*, and all: Which this COSCHEN, as the Hebrews call it, covered: and as it covered thoſe parts, ſo it was it ſelf covered, or *overlaid* with *twelve* Precious Stones. The *Sapphire*, which was the *tenth*, is only here mentioned; but it is uſual in Scripture, to touch only upon one thing in a Hiſtory, when the whole is intended. And beſides, it is evident from the foregoing part of this Verſe, that more muſt be underſtood, when one alone is mentioned: for *Rings* are ſpoken of in the Plural Number, and ſaid to be filled with *Turſis*; which muſt therefore denote more Stones than one; as *Sapphire* doth all the reſt of the *twelve*, which could not be mentioned in ſo ſhort a deſcription. Or *Sepphirim* here, in the Plural Number, may ſignifie Stones as precious as the *Sapphire*. Certain it is the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* thought there was ſome reſpect here to the High Prieſt's *Breaſt-plate*; for he mentions all the Stones therein, one by one. Which may make this Interpretation of mine to ſeem leſs ſtrange. And I conceive the *Sapphire* to be here mentioned rather than any other; becauſe it is of the colour of the Heavens, and fitteſt to repreſent the ſublime Dignity in which He is now deſcribed. For the Pavement under the feet of the God of *Iſrael*, when He appeared unto their Nobles at Mount *Sinai*, was of this colour, XXIV. *Exod.* 10. and ſo was the Throne of God in the Firmament, which *Ezekiel* ſaw, I. *Ezek.* 26.

Nor need it ſeem ſtrange that the *Belly*, upon which this covering was, is ſaid to be of *poliſhed Ivory* (when there is no mention of any ſuch thing in the Law) for it only denotes that it was as ſhining and bright as that: and may poſſibly relate to the Tunick or Coat of fine Linnen, wherein the High Prieſt was to Miniſter (XXXVIII. *Exod.* 39. XXXIX. 27.) eſpecially upon the great day of expiation, when he was not to put on his Robe, nor his fine Linen Coat, with any Embroidery, but of fine Linen alone, XVI. *Lev.* 4.

The LXX ſeem to think it was the Breaſtplate it ſelf (which indeed was very ſhining) for they tranſlate it πῖσον: which ſhows they meant ſome covering of the Belly which was hollow; as the Breaſtplate was. Which I doubt not is the *covering of Sapphires* here mentioned: it being ſet, as you read, with *twelve* large Precious Stones, wherein were engraven the names of the twelve Children of *Iſrael*. And was the moſt precious part of all the High Prieſt's Habit; and therefore more commonly called by the Jews an *Ornament*, than a *Garment*, or any part of his Veſture: the whole of which was contrived *for Glory and for Beauty*, XXVIII. *Exod.* 40. *i. e.* that God might be ſerved moſt magnificently.

[p] *V.* 15.] Next in order follows the deſcription of the *Thighs*; that is, of the Garments upon the Thighs: which were the very firſt that the High Prieſt put on, when he went about to clothe himſelf for his Miniſtry. And are here ſaid to be made of *Sheſch*: which is a Word common to *fine Linen*, and to *pure white Marble* (ſo the LXX twice tranſlate it *Parian Marble*, I. *Eſth.* 6. 2 *Chron.* XXIX. 2.) which the *Breeches* of the Prieſt reſembled, being made of *Byſſus*, or pure fine Linen; a thing of great price in thoſe Countries, as appears both by *Pliny* and *Pauſanias*. The latter of which Authors in his *Eliaca*, mentions this among the rare things (which were worthy of admiration) in that Country; and ſaith, *It was not Inferiour to the Byſſus of the Hebrews.* Who were ordered to make this part of the Prieſt's Garments of *twined fine Linen*, XXXIX. *Exod.* 28. which rendred them the more ſubſtantial; and made them ſit the fuller and ſtiffer, like *Pillars*. For the Hebrews ſay they were made of *ſix-thread Byſſus*: and that they

came

came down to the Knees; where they were not gathered at the bottom, but sat open.

Below which *Breeches* came down the holy *Mail* or Robe, upon the Skirts whereof hung round about Bells made of pure Gold, XXVIII. *Exod.* 34. Which may possibly be the Basis of fine Gold, here mentioned, to which the *Femoralia*, or Garments on the Thighs, reached. Some refer all this only to his stately gate, and Princely motion: others to his strength and firmness (which lies much in the Thighs) and his ability to march against his Enemies, and pursue them. And then the Sockets of fine Gold are his *Sandals*, bound upon his feet with golden Ribbands, or something of that nature. The Reader may chuse which he thinks most probable, for the explication of the first part of this Verse, *His legs* (or *thighs* rather) *are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine Gold.*

Now if my conjecture be allowed, then the latter part of the Verse will not be hard to explain. For this and all the rest of his habit being contrived for *Beauty and Glory*, as was said before from XXVIII. *Exod.* 40. it made the High Priest appear with unusual Majesty: the riches of these Vestments being not easily to be valued. And so his *countenance*, or rather his *aspect*, his *whole appearance* (as the Hebrew Word may signifie) *was as stately as Lebanon.* Which was one of the goodliest Sites in those Countries both for Cedars and many other things; especially after *Solomon* had made his Garden there, of which we read in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 15, 16.

Unto which lovely Forest and Garden, the appearance of the High Priest may be the better compared; because there were Flowers, as well as Pomegranates, if we may believe *Philo* (in his *third* Book of the *Life of Moses*) wrought in the bottom of the holy Robe. Which the LXX also affirm in express Words; that there was ἄνθινον, a *flowry Work*, as well as *Pomegranates* and *Bells* in the Hem of the *Meil*, XXVIII. *Exod.* 34. And indeed the Pomegranates being made of Wool of divers colours, they themselves might look like divers sorts of Flowers. And, besides this, it is to be observed, that several other parts of the High Priest's habit are peculiarly commanded to be made of a Work called *Choscheb*, which we translate *cunning work.* Thus *Ephod* is ordered to be wrought, XXVIII. *Exod.* 6. and the *Girdle* of it, *ver.* 8. and the *Breast-plate*, ver. 15. Which some translate *artificial*, others *ingenious work*: and all agree to have consisted in certain beautiful Figures of Flowers, and Animals; and in variety of colours. The *Girdle* moreover is ordered to be made of a Work called *rokem*, which we translate *needle-work*, ver. 39. because it is thought not to have differed from the former, save only in this; that the other things were only woven curiously, but this also curiously wrought with the Needle. The Jews give another difference; that this was wrought so that the Figures appeared on both sides, the other only on one. About which I shall not trouble my self, but only take notice that *Josephus* (in his *third Book of Antiquities*, Chap. 8.) explains this Work thus, *Flowers were woven in this Girdle, with Scarlet, Purple, Blue*, &c.

And if *Flowers*, and (as others say) *Animals*, then in all probability, *Trees* also were wrought in these Priestly Vestures: which made the fuller representation of a Forest. Among which that of *Lebanon* was the principal, and indeed the most beautiful place in all those Countries, which made the Prophet express the Glory of the Church in these Words, *The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it*, XXXV. *Isa.* 2. see also XIV. *Hos.* 5, 6, 7.

Some think that hereby only the tallness of his Stature is denoted; which was always looked upon as a Princely thing, as it was in *Saul.*

As for mystical applications of these two Verses, there are none to be sought for, if I have given the true sense of them, but such as relate to the excellency of Christ's everlasting Priesthood; and its preheminence above the other, as much as the Cedar excels all the Trees of the Forest.

[q] *V.* 16.] There is little difficulty here. For *mouth* (Hebrew *palate*, which is within the *mouth*) can signifie nothing but either his *words* which come from thence, or his *breath.* And words being mentioned before, *v.* 13. the latter is probably here intended. Which is said to be *sweetness*, nay, *sweetnesses*: denoting the perfect soundness of the internal parts; as the foregoing description sets forth the excellent shape, and stately Vesture of the outward: It is applied by Interpreters, to the purity of Christ's affections and passions: but may be, as well, to his breathing upon his Apostles, when He bid them receive the Holy Ghost. Which concluded, in a manner, what He did upon Earth, as it doth his description in this place. For she finding his Praises to exceed all her thoughts, summs up all in a breath; and comprehends his whole Character in this: That He is all over lovely; attracting all mens affections; not only those that saw Him, but those that heard of Him too.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

In the foregoing description, the Spouse expressed such an unfeigned affection to Him (which she again confidently asserts in this sixth Part of the Song, *v.* 3.) *that it not only mightily moved her Companions to join with her in the search of Him, but invited the return of the Bridegroom again. Who graciously declares the like affection unto her* (from *v.* 4. to the 11th) *in such Words as shewed that his kindness remained unalterable; and that he delighted in none but her: as incomparably more aimable, even by their own confession, than all those Beauties whom the World most admires. With which kindness she is so ravished, that it snatches her away from the dearest Friends she had, though very desirous of her Company, ver.* 12, 13.

Companions, or Daughters of Jeruſalem.

Verſe 1. *WHither is thy beloved gone, O thou faireſt among women? whither is thy beloved turned aſide? that we may ſeek him with thee.*] Theſe are high commendations indeed, which thou giveſt to thy Beloved, which make us in love with Him, as before we were (IV. 9.) and ſtill are with thee, O thou moſt lovely of all other Women: whither doſt thou think He hath betaken himſelf? He is not quite gone away, ſure, but only diverted into ſome retirement: Which way did he go? And where doſt thou gueſs He hath hidden Himſelf, that we may go along, and enquire Him out, with thee? *See* Annot. [*a*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of ſpices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.*] I heard my Beloved ſay, that He was gone down into that Garden, which He himſelf hath planted (V. 1.) there he delights to be, among thoſe pious perſons, whoſe Vertues make them like to the Garden-Beds, that are full of Spices: He is always preſent in every part of this happy Company; and hath fellowſhip with them; and is daily adding more and more pure and ſincere Souls who are without all guile, unto their Society. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.*] Of which I being a Member, hope I may ſtill ſay, that He hath not caſt me out of his favour; but ſtill retains a kindneſs for me: becauſe I am ſtedfaſt and faithful in my love to Him; who takes a conſtant care of ſuch as ſtudy to reſemble Him. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Bridegroom.

4. ¶ *Thou* art *beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jeruſalem, terrible as* an army *with banners.*] It is true, O my beloved Friend, who art ſtill dear unto me, and moſt amiable in my eyes: I have not loſt my eſteem of thee; for I ſee thou haſt not loſt thy affection to me: nor that lovely, that decent and comely order, which makes thee not only beautiful, but venerable; nay, amazes all Beholders, or at leaſt, ſtrikes them with great admiration of thee. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me; thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.*] Thou needſt not look ſo earneſtly, and with ſuch care and ſolicitude, upon me as if I had forgotten thee: for I ſee the ſame ſparkling Beauty in thy eyes, which I did before (IV. 1.) and it no leſs affects my heart (IV. 9.) thou wanteſt none of thoſe Ornaments which I formerly commended, but retaineſt them all, notwithſtanding the diſcompoſure, in which thou haſt been. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *Thy teeth* are *as a flock of ſheep, which go up from the waſhing, whereof every one beareth twins, and* there is *not one barren among them.*] The ſame I ſay alſo of thy Teeth, which are ſtill white and clean; even ſet both above and below; firm and ſound alſo; without any breach, or want of ſo much as one of them. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *As a piece of a pomegranate* are *thy temples within thy locks.*] And to be ſhort (and not to repeat every thing again) I ſee the ſame freſh colour in thy Cheeks; which makes thee look as lovely now thy Veil is off (V. 7.) as thou didſt in the firſt blooming of thy Beauty. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *There are threeſcore queens, and fourſcore concubines, and Virgins without number.*] Wherefore tho' other Kings and Princes of theſe Countries, have a great many Queens, and more Wives, of an inferiour Rank, and Virgins that attend them without number: whoſe Beauty they highly admire. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 9. *My dove, my undefiled is* but *one; ſhe is the* only *one of her mother, ſhe is the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters ſaw her, and bleſſed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praiſed her.*] I have one only, and none other, whom I entirely love; and that is thy ſelf alone: who preſerveſt an inviolable faith and affection to me, and therefore art dearer to me, than an only Daughter (and ſhe the moſt accompliſhed perſon and perfect beauty) is to her Mother: Whom all other perſons at laſt ſhall admire; the Queens themſelves before-named, called thee Bleſſed and wiſhing all proſperity to thee; and they of the next degree ſhall praiſe thy excellencies, and confeſs their own imperfections. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Ver. 10. ¶ *Who* is *ſhe* that *looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the ſun,* and *terrible as* an army *with banners?* Saying, What an aſtoniſhing Beauty is this, that appears like a clear Morning after a dark Night, and encreaſeth in luſtre more and more; looking as bright as the Moon when it is at Full; nay, as ſplendid as the Sun when it ſhineth in its ſtrength: and no leſs dazles our eyes, and amazes our thoughts, than a glorious Hoſt of Heaven; or an Army here on Earth, when it ſtands in Battalia's with all their Colours diſplay'd? *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *I went down into the garden of nuts, to ſee the fruits of the valley,* and *to ſee whether the vine flouriſhed,* and *the pomegranates budded.*] Only this I expect from thee, that thou bring forth fruit proportionable to my care of thee, and kindneſs to thee: for to that end I went down before (V. 1. VI. 2.) and now go again into my Garden (which I have not neglected to dreſs, and prune, and water) to take a view in what condition it is; and in what forwardneſs the ſeveral ſorts of Fruit are, which I juſtly look to receive in their due ſeaſons. *See* Annot. [*l*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 12. *Or ever I was aware, my ſoul made me* like *the chariots of Ammi-nadib.*] Alas! what am I, that I ſhould receive ſuch praiſes, who am not worthy of thy care? But they have put ſuch motions into my Soul, as make me aim at the higheſt Perfections; and make all the haſte I can likewiſe to attain them: And therefore I muſt, for the preſent, take leave of you, O my Friends, who have kindly aſſiſted me in the ſearch of my Beloved. *See* Annot. [*m*].

Companions.

Ver. 13. *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return that we may look upon thee; what will ye ſee in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.*] Let us have thy Company again, O

thou

thou faireſt, and moſt accompliſhed of all the daughters of *Jeruſalem*. Come back again, come back, that we may behold thy wondrous Perfections. And if any ask, What is that you would ſee? What would you enjoy in her happy Society? Our Anſwer is, ſuch a divine Preſence as appeared to *Jacob*, when he ſaw the Angelical Choirs; which made him cry out, *This is God's Hoſt*, and call the name of that place, *Mahanaim*. *See* Annot. [*u*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *Ver.* 1.] The Daughters of *Jeruſalem* (mention'd *V.* 8.) here juſtify what the Spouſe had ſaid in the concluſion of the former Chapter: And declaring themſelves in love with Him whom ſhe had deſcribed, are deſirous to join themſelves to her Company, and go in queſt of Him. In order to which, they would know, Whither ſhe thought He was gone, when He went from her.

[*b*] *V.* 2.] Unto which ſhe replies in this Verſe, and ſeems to tell them, in his own Words, what ſhe had heard Him ſay about that matter, *V.* 1. And it ſignifies, that He was ſtill in his Church, and in every part of it; tho' ſometimes they were not ſenſible of it. For ſo *Theodoret* well obſerves, here is diſtinct mention made of a *Garden*, and of *Gardens*, *i. e.* of the Catholick Church, which is but one, and of the ſeveral Parts thereof. For ſometimes St. *Paul* mentions only the *Church* in the Singular Number, and ſometimes the ſeveral Churches, even in the ſame Nation, (as in the Epiſtle to the *Galatians*, I. 1.) and in the ſame Province, or City, 1 *Cor.* XIV. 34. He is ſaid here to *go down* into his Garden, with reſpect to the Mountains mentioned IV. 8. And to *feed*, in the *Hebrew*, is either to do the Office of a Shepherd to his Flock; or relates to his Communion with his People, mentioned Chap. IV. 16. V. 1. Which may be the meaning alſo of *gathering Lilies*: or, as *Theodoret* will have it, by this laſt Clauſe is to be underſtood, his gathering holy and pure Souls, that are like Him, and joining them unto his Church. And ſo the *Arabick* Tranſlation is, *to gather together the Lilies*; following the *Septuagint*, who tranſlate it, Συναίρων. And indeed I find the *Hebrew* Word *lakat*, ſignifies to collect things into an Heap or Bundle; as Stones, XXXI. *Gen.* 46. Manna, XVI. *Exod.* 27. Fruit, XIX. *Lev.* 9. Silver, XLVII. *Gen.* 14.

The whole denotes, that Communion with Him is only to be ſought in his Church: eſpecially in that part of it which preſerves the Order, wherein He hath diſpoſed all things (like the Walks and Beds in a Garden) and keep themſelves alſo in the purity of his Religion.

[*c*] *V.* 3.] Now ſhe ſeems to have ſo perfectly recovered her ſelf out of the ſlumber wherein ſhe had been, as to have regained her former ſenſe of Him, and of her Intereſt in Him: repeating thoſe Words which we met withal before, Ch. II. 16. Of the latter part of which [*he feedeth among the Lilies*] I think fit here farther to note, that *to feed* may relate either unto Himſelf, or unto others: for there are Examples of both. Of the former, XLI. *Gen.* 2. I. *Job* 14. Of the latter, XXIX. *Gen.* 7, 9. XXXVII. 12. I take it here rather in this latter ſenſe, and ſuppoſe it ſignifies his doing the Office of a Shepherd: and that he is ſaid *to feed among the Lilies*, as in the *Revelation*, *to walk in the midſt of the ſeven Candleſticks*, *i. e.* there to have his Converſation, to take up his abode with them, &c. as He often ſays in the Goſpel of St. *John*, (XIV. 23.) that He would with thoſe who love Him and keep his Commandments.

And ſuch Perſons are here compared to *Lilies*; which being a Name given by Chriſt to Himſelf, *Greg. Nyſſen* and *Theodoret* hereby, not unfitly, underſtand, ſuch as are conformed to Chriſt their Head, and have his Image wrought in their Souls, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. For, ſaith the former of them, ὅσα ἀληθῆ, &c. *whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt*, &c. (ſee IV. Philip. 8.) ταῦτα κρίνα ἐστὶ καὶ νύμφης, *theſe are the Lilies in which Chriſt delights.*

[*d*] *V.* 4.] And now we muſt conceive, either that they went to the Garden together, and there found Him; or that He hearing this hearty profeſſion of unmoveable love to Him, meets them: and, to revive her drooping Spirits, falls again into a new commendation of the Spouſe; in the very ſame terms as before, and in ſome higher.

And *firſt* He compares her to *Tirzah*, which was a beautiful Situation in the Country of *Ephraim*; and therefore made choice of after theſe times, by *Jeroboam*, for the Seat of his Kingdom: and ſo continued till the building of *Samaria*, as we read 1 Kings XIV. 17. XV. 21, 33. and ſeveral other places: to which add XII. *Joſh.* 24. The very original of the Word ſignifies as much as *Urbs amabilis*, or a City that pleaſeth one: and therefore choſen by one of the ancient Kings of *Canaan* for the place of his reſidence.

And leſt this ſhould not be high enough, He next compares her to *Jeruſalem*, which was the moſt lovely place in the Territories of *Judah*, and indeed of the whole Country. For which cauſe, as it had been the Seat of one of the Kings of *Canaan*, ſo the Royal Palace of *David*, nay the Houſe of God himſelf was afterward there built: and is called by *Jeremiah* in his Lamentations, *the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth*, II. 15. It is mentioned by *Pliny* likewiſe, *L.* 5. *C.* 14. as the moſt famous City in the *Eaſt*.

And as ſhe had commended Him before, not only for his Beauty, but Majeſty; ſo He doth here, in the laſt place, call her *terrible as an Army ſtanding in Battalia's*; ſtriking an awe, that is, into Beholders. So I think it is to be expounded, as referring ſtill to the goodlineſs of her aſpect, and not to her being invincible, inexpugnable, and ſtriking terror into her Enemies; as ſome interpret the whole Verſe. Every part of which ſeems to me to be a new proof, that *Solomon* ſpeaks not in this Book of one ſingle Perſon (whom ſome fancy the *Shulamite*, others *Pharaoh*'s Daughter; whom

others

take for one and the ſame) under the name of the Spouſe; but of a Body or Society of Men: for none elſe can be fitly compared to Cities, nay, to great Armies drawn up under their Banners. Which laſt part of this Verſe may be applied to the comely Order which Chriſt appointed in his Church; which, while it was preſerved, made the Church very venerable in the World. So *Theodoret*, ἐκπλήττου σι, *&c. For they are aſtoniſhed who behold thy Order, there being nothing diſorderly, nothing uncertain or undetermined, nothing confuſed and indiſtinct: but all* τάξεως καὶ κανόνος, *orderly appointed, and judiciouſly determined.*

Some refer this *terribleneſs*, as we tranſlate it, to the *gravity*, or rather *ſeverity* of her Countenance, which forbad all wanton approaches to ſo great a Beauty.

[e] *V.* 5.] In this and the following Verſes He ſeems to deſcend to a particular deſcription of the ſeveral Parts of her Beauty: as He had done before, Chap. IV. 1, 2, *&c.* And He doth it in the very ſame Words, for the moſt part, to aſſure her, that He had ſtill the ſame Eſteem of her, and Kindneſs for her: and that, notwithſtanding what had happened, it had not altered her ſo much as to abate any thing of his Affection; or to make her appear otherwiſe in his eyes than ſhe had done. This ſeems to me to be the true reaſon of this repetition: others are given by *Theodoret* and other Authors.

And firſt He begins with the commendation of her *Eyes*, as He had done IV. 1. (tho' in other Words.) For ſo the firſt Clauſe of this Verſe may be tranſlated, *turn thine eyes towards me:* the *Hebrew* Phraſe ſignifying not only to turn ones ſelf from another, but ſometimes to turn towards them; as 1 Chron. XII. 23. And then we are to conceive that He ſpeaks to her, as one aſhamed to look upon Him; whom ſhe had ſo much diſobliged: and bids her take more confidence, for He was ſtill in love with her.

If we follow the common Tranſlation, I take the ſenſe ſtill to be the ſame: that ſhe need not trouble her ſelf any farther; for ſhe had prevailed in her ſuit to be reſtored to his Favour. The looking of the Eyes towards one, is as much as entreating and petitioning: which He tells her ſhe might ceaſe, by bidding her turn her eyes away from Him.

It is moſt ordinarily taken for an amorous Expreſſion: as if He had ſaid, her Eyes were ſo bright and dazling, he could not bear the Paſſion they excited.

Of the latter part of the Verſe ſee an account upon Chap. IV. 1.

[f] *V.* 6.] There is no difference between this Verſe and that in IV. 2. but only in one Word; which alters not the ſenſe. And as *harechelim*, *Sheep*, was to be fetch'd from hence to ſupply the ſenſe there; ſo another Word, *hakketzuboth*, *even ſhorn*, is to be fetch'd from thence to ſupply it here.

[g] *V.* 7.] This is alſo exactly the ſame with the latter end of the *third* Verſe of the IVth Chapter. The LXX. have alſo the *firſt* part: but they might as well have added all that there follows: which is here omitted.

[h] *V.* 8.] Here, moſt think, *Solomon* alludes to the number of his own Wives; who were fewer, they ſuppoſe, in the beginning of his Reign (as *Bochartus* himſelf gathers from theſe Words, in his Epiſtle to the now Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, p. 126.) and that then he compoſed this Song, before he let the Reins of his Luſt ſo prodigiouſly looſe, as afterwards we read he did, 1 *Kings* XI. 1, *&c.* But it is not at all likely that he had ſo many as are here mentioned, while his mind was filled with ſuch divine Raptures as theſe: And therefore I ſuppoſe he alludes to the Cuſtom of other Princes in the *Eaſt*; who, beſides their principal Wives that were ſolemnly eſpouſed and endowed, had alſo another ſort who were neither; and yet were Wives, called by the *Hebrews*, *Philagſhim*, *Concubines*. And ſuch a difference the *Romans* anciently made between her whom they called *Matrona*, who was only taken in marriage; and her whom they called *Materfamilias*, who was taken alſo to order and govern the Family, and whoſe Children inherited. As may be ſeen in *Aulus Gellius*, L. XVIII. C. 8. where he confutes *Ælius Meliſſus*, a conceited *Grammarian*, who had ſtarted other ungrounded Notions of theſe Words.

And then *threeſcore* and *fourſcore* are only a certain number for an uncertain; not the preciſe number of theſe Wives and Concubines. *Theodoret* thinks by theſe are myſtically intended ſeveral Ranks of Chriſtians in the Church: ſome more, ſome leſs perfect: But they diſcourſe better, in my Opinion, who rather accommodate theſe to the ſeveral ſorts of Heretical and Schiſmatical Churches: ſome of which gloried in the multitude of their Followers, and in their wealth and ſplendor: but Chriſt hath only one Catholick Church, more glorious than them all put together; as it follows here in the next Verſes. And thus, in effect, *R. Solomon Jarchi*, and ſome other *Hebrew* Expoſitors, underſtand theſe Words with application to themſelves. *Abraham* and his Poſterity, ſay they, till the Deſcendants from *Iſrael*, were *threeſcore* in number (compared here to Queens.) The Sons of *Noah* and their Deſcendants unto *Abraham*, were *fourſcore* (compared to Concubines.) The reſt who came from *Cham*, *Iſhmael*, and *Eſau*, could not be comprehended under a certain number. And ſo the meaning is, Whatſoever kindneſs God had for the reſt of *Abraham*'s Poſterity, or of *Noah*'s, (not to mention *Cham*, *Iſhmael* and *Eſau*,) yet I have choſen, ſaith God, my people *Iſrael*, whom I have eſpouſed to my ſelf, by Circumciſion, and by the Law, and by Sacrifices, *&c.*

[i] *V.* 9.] This Verſe needs not much Explication: wherein the Spouſe is oppoſed to all the forenamed Beauties: who are conſtrained to confeſs her preheminence. The *Hebrew* Word for *one*, ſignifies alſo *onely*: and an *onely* Child is as much as a beloved Child: As appears by this that μονογενὴς, *onely begotten*, and ἀγαπητὸς, *well-beloved*, are Words of the ſame import in the New-Teſtament. And if ſuch

ſuch an onely Daughter be alſo *barah*, (*choice* we tranſlate it, or) *pure*, as the Word originally imports; free from all blemiſh (that is, a perfect Beauty) it makes her ſtill more dearly beloved.

It is in vain to enquire here, who is the *Mother* intended in this place: for his love is only compared to the *love* of a Mother toward ſuch an only Daughter: who hath ingroſſed, as we ſpeak, all the excellent Qualities that are in any other Perſon. Which forced the Daughters to admire her (ſo *ſaw her* ſignifies; they look'd upon her with admiration), and the Queens to bleſs her; and the Concubines to proclaim her Praiſes. Thus it is moſt likely the latter part of this Verſe ſhould be interpreted, *the Daughters ſaw her, and the Queens bleſſed her, and the Concubines they praiſed her.* For tho' the Jews now have otherwiſe diſtinguiſhed the Words by their Accents, yet *Maimonides*, I obſerve, diſtinguiſhes them, as I have done, in his Preface to *Seder Zeraim.*

St. *Cyprian*, from this and ſuch like places of this Book (IV. 8, 12. V. 1.), proves there is but one only holy Catholick Church; making this Obſervation (*Epiſt. 75. Edit. Oxon.*) *we ſee one perſon every where mentioned*, and no more; *becauſe the Spouſe alſo is one*, &c.

[*k*] *V.* 10.] This ſome take to be the beginning of a new part of this Song: and *Theodoret*, in particular, here begins his Fourth Book of Commentaries upon it: but I look upon theſe Words as the Praiſes and Commendations which the *Queens* and *Concubines*, beforementioned, beſtow upon the Spouſe; with admiration and aſtoniſhment at her tranſcendent Beauty.

They need no explication, being of known ſignification; only it is fit to note, that to make the Elogy more magnificent, the ſpeech grows and encreaſes. For tho' the *Morning* be very beautiful and agreeable to every eye; yet the *Moon* is ſtill more bright; and the Sun far brighter than that: but *all the hoſt of heaven* (which I take to be meant in the laſt words) ſtill more wonderful and amazing. For there being a gradation in this place, and all the other expreſſions relating to the heavens, it is reaſonable to think that this doth ſo too: and that we are to underſtand by it the *Armies or Hoſt of Heaven* (as the Scripture calls the Stars) rather than Armies upon Earth. However, I have put both into the Paraphraſe, but have not medled with myſtical applications: They that deſire them may look into the Commentaries of three Fathers, where this Verſe is applied to the four degrees of Chriſtians that are in the Church. Others, with more reaſon, apply it to the progreſs which the Church herſelf made in ſplendor and greatneſs: being at firſt like the *Morning* when the Day breaks, after a long Night of Ignorance: and then the light of Chriſtian Knowledge advanced, till the Church appeared like the *Moon* (whoſe paleneſs may ſerve for an Emblem of the Terrors which Perſecution ſtruck into their Hearts) till, in the iſſue, it diſperſed all miſts, and conquering all oppoſition, ſhone like the *Sun*: and then was ſettled in *Conſtantine's* Time, like a well-ordered Army, which beat down all Idolatry.

They that would ſee more of theſe applications may look into *Commenius's* Book *De Bono Unitatis*; in the beginning whereof there are applications of theſe things, both unto the Church in general, and unto particular Churches.

[*l*] *V.* 11.] This ſeems to be the voice of the Bridegroom declaring what returns He expected to his love. The Word *Agoz*, which we tranſlate *Nuts* (of which there were ſeveral kinds, ſome very rich, as the *Piſtick*) is found only here: and by ſome is tranſlated *ſhorn* or *cut*; which I have not omitted in my Paraphraſe. And *beibe hannachal* (*Fruits of the Valley*) the LXX tranſlate *Shoots by the Brook*, or River, where Plants are apt to grow beſt: which is very agreeable to the Original. The reſt of the Words are common: and the whole Verſe ſignifies that He went to look after the fruits of all ſorts. The myſtical applications may be found in all Interpreters.

[*m*] *V.* 12.] The meaning of this Verſe ſeems to be, that the Spouſe, hearing ſuch high commendations of her ſelf, both from Him, and from the perſons mentioned, *v.* 10. with great humility ſaith, that ſhe was not conſcious to herſelf of ſuch perfections (for ſo the firſt Words ſound in the *Hebrew*, *I did not know it*, or *I did not think ſo*) but is excited thereby to make the greateſt ſpeed to endeavour to preſerve this Character He had given her; and to go along with Him into his Garden (which ſhe had neglected before, V. 2.) there to give a good account of her proficiency. For which end ſhe ſeems on a ſudden to take leave of her Friends (who had been ſo charitable as to go along with her to ſeek Him) that ſhe might, for ſome time enjoy his Company alone: Which is the ground of their calling upon her to return, in the next Verſe. This is the beſt account I can give of theſe two laſt Verſes.

It is ſuppoſed *Ammi-nadib* was ſome great Captain who purſued his Victories, or Advantages, very induſtriouſly, with very ſwift Chariots.

[*n*] *V.* 13.] This Verſe is the voice of her Companions or Friends; ſome of which wiſh for her coming back, that they might enjoy her Company again, and ſee how ſhe was improved: and the reſt ask what they expected to ſee in her? to which the other reply in the laſt Words, *as it were the Company*, &c.

The repetition of the Word *return*, four times over, expreſſeth their vehement affection to her, and their deſire to have her Company again; whom they call *Sulamith*; as much as to ſay *Jeruſalamith*: For the name of that place formerly was *Salem*, which carries Peace in its ſignification; or, as others will have it, *Perfection*; for *Shalam* in the ſecond Conjugation, ſignifies to *finiſh*, or *perfect*. And is a fit name here for the Church, the *New Jeruſalem*, built by Chriſt himſelf. This ſeems to me a great deal more probable than the conjecture of *Menochius* (*L.* III. *de Repub. Hebr. C.* XXI. *n.* 14.) who, becauſe Wives, when they were married, took the name of their Husbands, thinks the Spouſe from *Solomon* had the name

of *Sulamith*; which *Aquila* translates εἰρηνικὴν, *pacifick*, i. e. *Solomonidem*. The Reader may follow which he likes best. *Solomon* seems to me not to have had respect to his own Spouse in this Song.

To *see*, or *look upon her*, signifies to enjoy her happy Society; and the benefit of her excellent Vertues and Perfections. Whom, in the two last Words, He seems to me to compare unto the Choirs of the heavenly Hosts. For the Word *Mechola* doth not signify any kind of *Company*; but of such as dance or sing: as may be seen in XV. *Exod.* 20. XXXII. 19. XI. *Judg.* 34. XXXI. *Jer.* 4. V. *Lament.* 15. and many other places. Which shew that it signifies both *Chorea* a Dance, and *Chorus* the Company that dances: and so the LXX here translate it, χοροὺς, Choirs. And *Mahanaim* (which we translate *two Armies*) may as well be a proper Name as *Ammi-nadib* in the Verse foregoing: and relates to the appearance of Angels to *Jacob*, XXXII. *Gen.* 2. as a token of God's special presence with him; and most lively sets forth the far more glorious presence of God, now in the Christian Church. Or if we interpret it *Armies* or Hosts, as we do; still it may signify the Armies above in the Heavens; either the Stars or the *Angels*, called *the Armies in Heaven*, XIX. *Rev.* 14. and *Army of Heaven*, IV. *Dan.* 35.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins, as I take it, a new part (which is the VIIth) of this Song; and reaches to Verse the eleventh. In which the Spouse is represented returning again, as they desired in the end of the foregoing Chapter: and, appearing in greater lustre than before, the Company of Friends who attended her, praise her beautiful perfections; in such a description as was made of them Chap. IV. tho' varying from it in several things (which is the summ of the first nine Verses.) Of which perfections she modestly acknowledging her Lord to be the Author, and assuming nothing to her self, (v. 10.) is excited thereby only to do the more good, and to labour to extend his Empire over more hearts; who were not yet subject to Him, v. 11, &c. where the VIIIth part of this Song begins, and continues to the fifth Verse of the next Chapter.

Companions, *or* Daughters of Jerusalem.

Verse 1. HOw *beautiful are thy feet with shooes, O princes daughter! the joints of thy thighs* are *like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.*] And now that she appears again, like the Daughter of the great King, in all her Royal Apparel. (XLV. *Psal.* 13.) who can chuse but admire the beauty of the meanest thing belonging to her! The very shooes of thy feet are most lovely; and so are all the Ornaments of thy Thighs, which were made by no common or careless Artist, but by one that hath herein shown the best of his skill. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *Thy navel* is like *a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly* is like *an heap of wheat, set about with lilies.*] Which other excellent Artists have equalled in that part of thy Vesture, which covers the middle of thy Body: in the very centre of which is a Fountain; within a curious Work, rising up like a heap of Wheat, encompassed round about with Lilies. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *Thy two breasts* are *like two young roes that are twins.*] Above which, thy two Breasts rise up so purely white and exactly round, and every where of such just proportions, that two young Kids which were formed together and brought forth at the same time, are not more like one another, or more lovely than they. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Ver. 4. *Thy neck* is *as a tower of ivory, thine eyes* like *the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose* is *as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.*] Thy Neck also lifts up it self, with the same or greater beauty, wherein we before beheld it (IV. 4.) being no less smooth and purely white, than it is straight and well-shap'd. And the famous Pools at the great Gate of *Heshbon* also, are not more quiet and clear than thy eyes: which are as pure and free from all perturbation, as they are fair and large: between which thy well-proportion'd Nose rising up, adds as much beauty and majesty to thy Face, as the Tower of *Lebanon* (whose top shows itself above the Trees) doth to that noble Forest. *See* Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *Thine head upon thee* is *like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king* is *held in the galleries.*] And now that we take a view of thy Head, we seem to be come to the top of Mount *Carmel*; which is not more richly adorn'd by Nature, than its excellent form is by Art: which hath contrived the most Royal Ornaments for it, and made thee an object fit for the King's affection; who beholding thee from his Palace, is fixed in contemplation of thy Beauty. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Ver. 6. *How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!*] Which cannot be described, but only admired, and constrains all to say: O how happy art thou! and how happy are they who are acquainted with thee! For what Beauty is like to that, or what Pleasures comparable to those which thou imparteſt to them that are in love with thy delights. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of* grapes.] Whose tall and upright Stature adds much to all this Beauty; and makes thee resemble the goodly Palm-Tree: within whose Boughs those clusters hang, to which we may compare thy Breasts between thy Arms. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. *I said, I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breast shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples:*] Which seem to be stretched out to receive us into thy embraces, and invite me and all my Company, with a joint resolution to say, We will take hold of the Boughs of this Tree: we will get up into it and taste of its Fruit: And now shall be happy indeed, and enjoy those sweet delights which flow from thy Breasts, and from the Breath of thy Mouth; far more refreshing and comfortable than the choicest Fruit that this good Land affords. *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver.

Ver. 9. *And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth* down *sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep, to speak.*] For the richest and most generous Wine, which when we have tasted, we say, Let it be sent to the best of Friends, is not more comfortable to the bodily Spirits, tho' it be so powerful as to make old Men brisk, nay, to enliven those that are at the point of Death, than thy words are to raise and restore the Souls of those who imbibe the sense of them into their minds. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Spouse.

Ver. 10. *I* am *my beloved, and his desire* is *towards me.*] If there be any thing in me that is pleasing to you, and deserves such praises, ascribe it all to Him from whom I received it; for, as I have often said, I am his intirely, and He is pleased to be entirely mine; having espoused Himself unto me with great desire, XLV. *Psal.* 11. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages.*] And O that He (without whom I can do nothing) would accompany me in the charitable design I have, to go and visit other people, besides you, O ye Daughters of *Jerusalem?* Let us go, my Beloved, unto those poor despised people that live in the Fields and Country Villages: let us not only go to them, but dwell among them. *See* Annot. [*l*.]

Ver. 12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish,* whether *the tender grape appear,* and *the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.*] Let us diligently visit the Vineyards, that have been newly planted there; and bestow our utmost care upon them: let us see if they give any hope of good Fruit; in promoting which, I will give thee a proof of my extraordinary love. *See* Annot. [*m*.].

Ver. 13. *The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates* are *all manner of pleasant* fruits, *new and old,* which *I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*] And behold the happy success of such care and diligence! the most excellent Fruit is already ripe, and meets us with its refreshing smell; there is nothing so choice and so pleasant, but it grows every where; and is at the very Gates: and that in great plenty and variety, both of this Year's Fruit and of the last: which shall all be reserved for thy uses, and employed for thy honour, O my Beloved, from whom it all comes; and for the good and profit of those that belong to Thee. *See* Annot. [*n*].

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] *V.* 1. They who earnestly solicited the return of the Spouse, in the conclusion of the former Chapter, seem now to have a view of her again; and praise her perfections in a new method; beginning at the Feet, and so upward (whereas before, Chap. IV. her description was from the Head and so downward) because they saw her in motion: when she went away, and now at her return to them. Whom they call the *Princes Daughter,* alluding, I take it, to XLV. *Psal.* 13, 14. and conceiving her as that Royal Bride, whose clothing is there represented as very glorious. And accordingly they admire her very *Shoes* or *Sandals* (by whose shape the beauty of the Feet was discerned) which were wont to be set with *Gemms*; as we learn from many Authors; I shall name none but the Book of *Judith,* (because what *Greek* or *Roman* Writers say about their own Shooes, is not material) where *Sandals* are mentionad as a part of the bravery, wherein she set forth her self, to deceive *Holofernes,* X. 4. And with these she is said, in her Song, to *have ravished his eyes,* XVI. 9. See also III. *Isai.* 18.

Now the Feet not being here considered as naked, in all reason we ought not to expound the next Words of the naked *Thighs* (the discovery of which had been immodest) but of the clothing of them round about. For so that Word we translate *Joints* is expounded by others, the *circuit*; or, as the LXX, *their whole proportion* or *model:* Which was as fine, as the Ornaments that adorned them. So *Chelaim* signifies; which *R. Solomon* here observes is an *Arabick* Word, denoting not *Jewels* (as we translate it) but the *fine attire and trimming,* wherewith Women deck themselves, to set off their beauty.

Which agrees with what follows, *The work of the hands of a cunning Workman.* Where *Workman* also signifies, not any Artificer, but a *Goldsmith,* who (as *Bochart* hath observed) made Wires, Laces, Wreaths, Rings, and such like little Ornaments of Gold and Silver, as Women used.

The *Chaldee* Paraphrase applies all this, to the peoples going up three times a year to the publick Feasts: as *R. Solomon* before-named, expounds also that place in LII. *Isai.* 7. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet,* &c. Which, with more reason others apply, to their return into their own Country, out of Captivity; and the Christian Writers apply to the Apostles, going through the World to preach the Gospel, whose stedfastness herein, may be also here represented: though I see not why it may not as well be applied to Christians going cheerfully to worship God in their publick Assemblies.

[*b*] *V.* 2.] The Garments, I doubt not, of these Parts are still described in this Verse. For what resemblance hath the *Belly* it self of any person (which it had not been seemly neither to describe) unto *an heap of Wheat set with Lilies?* And they seem to me to have had in their eyes, that *Apparel of wrought Gold,* mentioned XLV. *Psal* 13. and represent that part of it which covered the *Belly,* to be of *raised* or *embossed* Work, resembling an *heap of Wheat.* By which it is possible may be meant, *many Sheaves of Wheat* embroidered round about (as the King's Daughters raiment was, XLV. *Psal.* 14.) with Flowers, especially with *Lilies.* And then this was a Figure wherein *Harvest* was represented: which is no unlikely conjecture; for anciently nothing was more honourable than to follow Tillage or Pasturage. From whence it is, that we find in the latter end of *Homer's* 18th *Iliad,* that the device contrived by *Vulcan* in *Achilles's* Shield, were Reapers, cutting down ripe Corn; and the King himself standing in a furrow, and providing a Dinner for them.

Now

Now in the very midſt of this Work, I conceive there was a *Fountain*: which I take to be the meaning of the firſt Words of the Verſe, *Thy Navel is a round Goblet, which wanteth not Liquor*; that is, *a great Bowl or Baſin, was wrought in the Center of the Embroidery: full of Water, which ran continually from above into it.* Or, a *Conduit, running with ſeveral ſorts of Liquors, into a great Bowl.* Unto which the Word *hammazog* (importing a *mixture*) ſeems to incline the ſenſe.

The Word *agan*, which properly ſignifies κρατῆρ, as the LXX tranſlate it, a *great Bowl* or *Baſin*; is uſed by the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt for a receptacle of Water, in Fountains or in Ditches. As in IV. *Judg.* 11. where the *Valley* or Plain of *Agannaja*, of Bowls, which was in *Kedeſh*, is interpreted by *Kimchi*, the Field, in which were many Pits or Trenches, like to Bowls, full of Water. This ſeems to be a plainer Interpretation, than that of *Zanchez*; who fanſies this to have been ſome Jewel, that hung down from her Girdle upon the Navel; which was of this form, round like the Moon. And the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt underſtood it to be of this Figure, when he applies it *to the Head of their School, who ſhone in the knowledge of the Law, like the Circle of the Moon: and ſeventy Wiſe men round about him, like a Heap of Wheat.*

What is the myſtical meaning of this *Hieroglyphick Veſture* (as it may be called) is very hard to ſay. It may be applied to the two Sacraments, which the Church adminiſters to her Children: The Font in Baptiſm being repreſented by the former; and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by the other part of this Figure.

[c] *V.* 3.] This Verſe hath been explained before, IV. 5. I only obſerve, that the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt applies theſe two Breaſts to the *two Meſſiahs*, whom they fooliſhly expect; the *Son of David*, and the *Son of Ephraim*: who ſhall be like *Moſes* and *Aaron*, &c. Which I mention, becauſe it ſhews that the Jews have an Opinion, that the *Meſſiah* is diſcourſed of in this Book; and that theſe Words are to be applied to the Leaders of the Church, ſuch as *Moſes* and *Aaron*. Of which ſee in the place before-named.

[d] *V.* 4.] The *Tower*, to which the Neck is here compared, in all probability is the ſame with that, IV. 4. where it is called *the Tower of David*: and here *the Tower of Ivory*; becauſe of its ſmoothneſs and whiteneſs. And the Phraſe is varied, perhaps, to expreſs an encreaſe of Beauty: for ἐλεφάντινος τεῖχος we meet withal in *Anacreon*, in a deſcription of extraordinary handſomneſs.

In like manner the Eyes are here compared to *Pools*; for ἐμμάτων ὑγρότης, the ſhining moiſture of the eyes, is commended as very beautiful, by many Authors. Particularly by *Plutarch*, who commends this in *Pompey*, and in *Alexander*: And by *Philoſtratus* in his Epiſtles very frequently: *Thou ſeemeſt to me* (ſaith he, Epiſt. γυν. κωμικὴ) *to carry Water as it were from the Fountain of thy eyes,* ᾗ δὲ οὖσα τῶν νυμφῶν εἶ, *and therefore to be one of the Nymphs.*

Among *Pools*, thoſe fair ones at *Heſhbon* were much celebrated; which were in the very entrance of the City, hard by the Gate called *Bath-rabbim*; becauſe it open'd towards the way that led to *Rabbah*, the Metropolis of the Children of *Ammon*: which made the more people paſs in and out at it. For *Heſhbon* we find in XXI. *Numb.* 24, 25, *&c.* was the principal City of *Sihon*, whoſe Country bordered upon the *Ammonites*: and it fell to the ſhare of the *Gadites*, who deſired this Country becauſe it abounded with Paſturage, and was excellently watered: there being many Rivulets and Brooks in its Neighbourhood, from whence the *Pools of Heſhbon* were ſupplied. Which were remarkable for their *purity* and *ſerenity*, or *quietneſs*: and therefore fitter to repreſent the compoſed, ſettled eyes of a modeſt virgin.

Whoſe gravity and Majeſty, I ſuppoſe, is alſo ſet forth in the next Words by comparing her *Noſe* to that *Tower which was in Lebanon*; and appeared at a diſtance among the Trees, (eſpecially on that ſide which looks towards *Damaſcus*) as the Noſe in the Face, doth among the Locks of Hair, that fall upon the Cheeks. A large, but well-proportioned Noſe, was always accounted a conſiderable part of Beauty: and an indication, it was generally thought, of greatneſs of mind and heigth of ſpirit. Some add, that it is a token of ſagacity and prudence: and the Noſe being the inſtrument of ſmelling, they apply it to the great judgment and foreſight of the Doctors of the Church; who, they think, may be hereby intended. For as the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt applies this whole Verſe to the *Sanhedrin*, who governed the Affairs of that people (who were as full of Wiſdom, ſaith he, as a Pool is of Water) ſo Chriſtians generally by *Eyes* underſtand the Guides and Governours of the Church. Who may the better be compared to the *Pools of Heſhbon*; becauſe it was, after the Conqueſt of *Canaan*, one of the Cities of the *Levites* (XXI. *Joſh.* 39.) whoſe Office it was to inſtruct the people. And ſuch being called by the Jews *Rabbim*, and in the Singular Number *Rabbi*, and *Rabbuni*, ſome have fanſied that they are alſo denoted in the name *of the Gate of Bath-rabbim*. For *bath* (*daughter*) ſignifies people, or inhabitants; who were taught by thoſe great Men (as *Rabbim* ſignifies) what was Law and Judgment in the Gates of their Cities. *Damaſcus* alſo being a great Enemy to *Iſrael*, and noted for Idolatry, they ſuppoſe, the Noſe being turned towards the *Watch-Tower* looking that way; is an Emblem of the care that Chriſtian Doctors ſhould take that their people be not ſeduced to Idolatrous Worſhip. We do not read any where in Scripture of this Tower: but that it was a *Watch-Tower* the Word *zophe* here intimates: which we tranſlate *looketh*; but ſignifies *looking like a Watchman.*

[e] *V.* 5.] It appears from the very Phraſe, *Thine head upon thee*, that they mean the covering of the head. And this being a deſcription of her utmoſt perfections, it denotes, I conceive, the Crown or Garland which ſhe wore (as ready for her Nuptials) reſembling the top of

Carmel.

Carmel. Which was another beautiful Mountain in that Country, whose head was cover-with great variety of Flowers and Trees. Certain it is, that as it was a rich and fruitful, so a very pleasant and lofty place, XXXV. *Isa.* 2. II. *Jer.* 7. and therefore fitly chosen to set forth the Dignity and Majesty of the Spouse.

But there is no necessity, it must be confessed, to interpret this of the Mountain *Carmel*: but the Words may be translated; *Thy head is like a pleasant fruitful Field.* For so the Word *Carmel* (from the goodliness, perhaps, of that Mountain) signifies in many places, XVI. *Isa.* 10. XXXII. 15. XLVIII. *Jer.* 33. where *joy and gladness is* said to be *taken mi-carmel* from *Carmel*: which we truly translate *from the plentiful* (or pleasant) *Field.* For there the Prophet speaks of *Moab*, in which Country *Carmel* it self was not. And this is an illustration of Beauty in other Authors: who compare the head of a delicate Woman unto a fair Meadow or Field. As *Philostratus* writes to his Wife, ἡ σὴ κεφαλὴ λειμῶνι πολὺ ἄνθει ὁμοίαν, &c. *Thy Head is a large Meadow full of Flowers; which are never wanting in the Summer, and disappear not in the midst of Winter.* And in the same manner *Achilles Tatius*, L. I. saith of his *Clitophon* and *Leucippe*, ἐπὶ τ' ἀγροῦ τὸν ἐραστὴν ἐκάθισε λειμῶνι, &c.

The next Word *dallath* is never used any where for Hair; but should rather be translated the *Hair-lace*: that therewith the Hair, and all the Ornaments belonging to it, were tied up. This *Hair-lace* is said here to be of a *purple colour*, i. e. it was rich and noble. For this was the Royal Colour, and therefore called here the *Purple of the King* (as the Vulgar Latin takes it, joining the latter part of the Verse with this) *tied up in folds, hanging down like canals*; that is, hanging loose upon the shoulders (as some expound it) it waved up and down: imitating the frizzles and curls of the water in Canals. Others refer the two last Words to *Purple*, lying in Canals, to receive a deeper tincture, by being double died. Vid. *Menoch. de Repub. Hebr.* L. I. C. X. n. 6.

But the LXX make the last Words a distinct Sentence, as we do, in this manner; *The King is tyed or bound in his Walks.* That is, when he walks in his Palace Royal, and beholds her beauty, he stands still, and cannot take his eyes off from her; being captivated with it, and tied as fast to her, as the Hair of her Head is to the Lace that binds it.

The former part of this Verse is applied by the Chaldee Paraphrast to the *King* (the Head of the people) *who shall be just like* Elias; *who was zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and slew the false Prophets upon Mount* Carmel: and the latter part of it to their *poor, who shall be clothed by him in Purple*; *as* Daniel *was in* Babylon, *and* Mordecai *in* Shushan.

[f] *V.* 6.] This Verse may be taken either for a commendation of *love*, which had thus adorned her and raised her to this pitch of happiness: or of *her*, who is called *love*, in the abstract; to express more vehemently how lovely she was, and what pleasure they took in beholding her Beauty.

The first Word *fair* may relate to the rare composition of the whole Body: and the next Word *pleasant*, or *sweet*, or *comely* (as some translate it) to her graceful motion, gesture, and sweet conversation. And the sense, in short, is this; *O how desirable, do the pleasures which thou imparteſt, make thee.*

Theodoret's Note here is very pious; that we become thus beautiful and lovely (though deformed before) by delighting in Charity; and making doing good, our highest pleasure.

[g] *V.* 7.] This Verse is a reflection upon the whole foregoing description; as appears by the first Word *zoth, this*: As if they had said, *to all this thy stature is proportionable.* Which is compared to the *Palm-tree*; because it shoots up straight as well as high: and therefore sets forth that part of loveliness; which consists in tallness. Which was always thought a great addition to Beauty; and was one reason why Women wore Ornaments upon the very top of their Heads, as well as high Shoes, to make them appear the taller. The noblest Palm-trees of all other, were in *Judea* (especially about *Jericho*) as *Pliny* writes, L. XIII. C. 4. From whence it was that in future times, it became an Emblem of that Country: as we find in that Medal of the Emperor *Titus*, with a Captive Woman sitting under a *Palm-tree*, and the Inscription of *Judæa Capta.*

Our learned Country man, Sir *Tho. Brown* (in his *Miscellan. Tracts*, p. 78.) hath ingeniously observed that they speak emphatically, when they say they will *go up to take hold of the Boughs* of this Tree. For it must be ascended, before one can come at the Boughs which it bears only at the top and upper parts. But the Trunk or Body of it is naturally contrived, *densis, gradatisque corticum pollicibus, in orbibus* (as *Pliny* there speaks) with Rings in the Bark, orderly disposed, like steps, whereby it may be very easily climbed.

And the *Clusters*, to which the Breasts are here compared, some think, are nothing but the Fruit of this Tree, viz. *Dates*: for it is not expressed in the Hebrew what *Clusters* these were; the Word *Grapes* being added by our Translators of the Bible.

Who supposed, as others do, that Vines ran up the Palm-tree in those Countries: which agrees well with what follows in the next Verse, where the *Clusters of the Vine*, are mentioned, as a fit Emblem of her Breasts. Which were described before, *v.* 4. but now mentioned again: to shew that they look not merely at the Beauty, but the usefulness of that which is meant thereby. And *Theodoret* makes this pious Observation upon it, That *though the Church be described as sublime, and reaching up to Heaven* (as his Words are) *yet she accomodates her self to the weakest and lowest Souls: stretching out the Breasts of her Doctrine to all that need it. For the Bunches of the Palm-tree*, saith he, *hang down very low.* Which must be understood, not of their hanging down near the Earth, but below the Boughs: which are all at the top, and very high. For which reason *Menochius* (L. VII. *de Repub. Hebr.* C. VIII. n. X.) thinks it not

to be true, which *Aben Ezra* here notes; that the Vines in *Paleſtine* were joined unto Palm-trees; becauſe the Palm-tree hath not Boughs fit to ſupport the Branches of the Vine.

[b] *V.* 8.] I take this Verſe to be ſtill the Voice of the ſame perſons, though in the Singular Number (as appears from the mention of the *Beloved*, v. 9. which ſhows it is not He that ſpeaks here, but ſome other perſon) For one ſpake in the name of the reſt; (as *Daniel* did in the name of his other three Brethren, II. *Dan.* 30, 36.) or the whole *Choire* is conſidered but as one perſon: who deſire to have fellowſhip and communion with the Church in her Benefits. Of which having taſted, they ſay, *now alſo thy Breaſts ſhall be as Cluſters of the Vine*; that is, now we ſhall enjoy thoſe delicious pleaſures before-mentioned, *v.* 6.

That which we tranſlate *Noſe*, in the laſt Clauſe of the Verſe, the Vulgar tranſlate *countenance* (or *mouth* rather) agreeable enough to the Hebrew; and moſt agreeable to the reſt of the Words. For that which is *ſmelt* is the breath, coming out of the mouth: compared to the fragrancy of *Citrons*, *Oranges*, *Peaches*, or other ſorts of *tappuach*; which is a name (I obſerve above, II. 5. common to all ſuch Fruits, as well as thoſe we peculiarly call *Apples*: and indeed ſignifies any Fruit that hath a fragrant odour breathing from it.

And this may be thus myſtically expounded, *And now ſhall we delight to hang upon the Breaſts of the Church, and the Breath or Spirit of the Apoſtles; ſweeter than Grapes, or the ſmell of any other Fruit.*

[i] *V.* 9.] Which is farther explained in this Verſe. Where the *roof of the mouth*, i. e. the Words which come from thence, is compared to the moſt excellent Wine: which was ſo choice, that it was fit only to be preſented to him, to whoſe love they owed all they had (or ſo delicious, as our Tranſlation hath it, that it went down glibly) and ſo generous, that it put ſpirits into thoſe who were quite ſpent with Age; nay, raiſed thoſe who were, in a manner, dead. So this Character of the *beſt Wine*, runs word for word, in the Hebrew: *It goeth ſtraight to my Beloved, and cauſeth to ſpeak, the lips of old people, or of thoſe that ſleep*: that is, are dead. For this Word *Jeſchenim*, our Tranſlators thought, may either ſignifie, *old men*, or *men aſleep*: though exact Grammarians will not allow it; but make a great difference between *jeſchenim* and *jeſchanim*. The firſt of which (which is the word here) they ſay, never ſignifies old men, but only *Sleepers*.

But if we wave this nice diſtinction, the Words may alſo be thus tranſlated —— *which makes men ſpeak with the lips of the ancient*, i. e. Sentences, or moſt excellent Sayings. I omit other Gloſſes, which may be found every where.

[k] *V.* 10.] Here now the Spouſe, after long ſilence, puts an end to their *Encomium*: modeſtly acknowledging there was nothing in her that could deſerve it; but only as ſhe was His, who could not be praiſed enough.

The Words, in effect, we have met withal twice before, II. 16. VI. 3. For the meaning of the latter part, *his deſire is towards me*, is no more than this (as Mr. *Mede* hath obſerved upon XI. *Dan.* 37.) *He is my Husband.* Only there ſeems to me, to be an alluſion here to XLV. *Pſal.* 11. (*the King ſhall greatly deſire thy beauty*, &c.) unto which *Solomon*, as I take it, hath a reſpect all along in this Poem.

[l] *V.* 11.] And now ſhe turns her ſelf from them to Him (beginning a new part of this Song) and being augmented with theſe new Companions, who had joined themſelves unto her; ſhe deſires Him (without whom nothing could be affected) to go along with her into the Fields and Villages; that is, to thoſe places, which were not yet become his Garden, of which they had been ſpeaking hitherto. Or they were but preparing for it, by the culture he had begun to beſtow upon them: which, from the following Verſe, ſeems to be the meaning.

Cepharim, Villages, are oppoſed in Scripture to *Cities*, 1 *Sam.* VI. 18. and ſignifies ſmall Towns, and Hamlets, as we ſpeak, 1 *Chron.* XXVII. 25. VI. *Nehem.* 2. And the Word *Nalinah*, *let us lodge*; ſignifies to *tarry*, and to make ones *dwelling* or *abode* in a place, XCI. *Pſal.* 1. and may be applied to the ſettling of the Goſpel in thoſe Regions, where it was but newly planted. So *Theodoret* gloſſes; *Let us now take care of the meaneſt and moſt abject Souls, that have lain long neglected; which are Tropically called, the Fields and Villages.* Moſt apply it to the Gentile World, in this manner, *We have ſtayed long enough in the City of* Jeruſalem, *and in* Judæa; *let us go now to the Heathen*, &c. I paſs by other applications, which may be found in Interpreters; and only add this Note of my own, That the Goſpel was firſt preached in *Cities* moſtly, and from thence ſpread it ſelf in time into the neighbouring *Villages*: in which Idolatry laſted ſo much longer than in Cities, that they gave the name of *Paganiſm* to it.

[m] *V.* 12.] This Verſe ſuppoſes thoſe Fields (v. 11.) not to have been quite uncultivated; but that there were *Vineyards* (that is, *Churches*, in the Myſtical ſenſe) planted in them. And her deſire is, that He would accompany her, in viſiting them *early*; that is, *very diligently*, as the Word ſignifies in many places. Thus in the XXXIX. *Eccluſ.* 5. it is ſaid of a juſt man, that he will give his heart *to reſort early to the Lord that made him.* Which is ſuitable to what the Pſalmiſt ſaith, V. *Pſal.* 1. and *Jeremiah* XXI. 12. XXV. 2, 3. Thus *Theodoret* here expounds it, *It behoveth us to uſe all fitting diligence, in viſiting thoſe that have already received the preaching: whether they bring forth more than Leaves; and eſpecially, whether any Beginnings of Charity appear among them.* For ſo he expounds, *if the pomegranates bud forth.* And this, ſaith he, is the greateſt expreſſion of love to Him: which He makes the meaning of the laſt Words, *there will I give thee my loves.* For what care we beſtow upon them, He accounts as done to Himſelf: according to his own Words, *in as much as you have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye have done it unto me.*

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The *Vines* may signifie the lesser sort of people; and the *Pomegranates* the greater.

[a] *V.* 13.] The Word *Dudaim* is found only here, and in the XXX. Gen. 14. Where we read how *Jacob*'s Wives contended for them, as a most precious, that is, a rare and delicious Fruit. For none can imagine they strove about that now called by us *Mandrakes*; which are of a stinking smell, and very offensive; or about any ordinary Flower, such as *Violets* or *Jasemin* (by which some expound this Word) which they might have sent out their Maids to gather easily every where. *Ludolphus* therefore in his late *Ethiopick History* (L. I. C. IX. n. 23.) hath happily conjectured that it signifies the Fruit which the *Arabians* call *Mauz* or *Muza* (called by some the *Indian Fig*) which in the Abyssine Country is as big as a *Cucumber*; and of the same form and shape, *Fifty* of which grow upon one and the same Stalk; and are of a very sweet taste and smell: From which cognation (as he calls it) of a great many upon the same Stalk, he thinks it took the name of *judaim*. Which some derive from *dod*, either as it signifies *love*, or a *breast*; with which they fansie this Fruit to have had resemblance. So the sense of this Verse is, that they found more there than they expected: or, that by her care the most excellent Fruit was produced from people of the best rank (who may be understood by this most rare sort of Fruit) and that, every where: so that they needed not to be at the trouble to go far to gather it. For at their very *Gates* there where *Megadim*, all precious Spices (mentioned before, IV. 13. V. 1.) and those both *new and old* (a phrase for plenty and variety) which as a faithful Steward, she saith, she had laid up for Him; with the same care that we do the most precious Treasure. So the Word *zephanti* (*I have laid up*) is used, XVII. *Psal.* 13. CXIX. 11.

At the gates.] May also signifie as much as just ready to be gathered; or to be brought home. Some apply *new and old*, to the knowledge of the Old and New Testament, by which Idolatry was vanquished, and true Religion planted in the World: and they think our Lord Himself alludes to this place in those Words, XIII. *Matth.* 52. where he speaks of a wise Scribe that *bringeth forth out of his Treasures things new and old*. Others apply *new and old*, unto those Vertues, that flow only from Faith, Hope and Charity; and those that are planted in us by Nature. But I think it may most aptly be accommodated to the spiritual Gifts, which were newly bestowed upon the Church by the Holy Ghost, after our Lord went to Heaven; and the temporal Blessings, which they enjoyed before: which were now all reserved for Him, to be employed in his service. And so these Words seem to me to have a respect unto the CX. *Psal.* 3. where it is said, *In the day of his power, they should be a people of free-will Offerings*. For when men give up themselves to God sincerely, they readily devote all they have to his uses; when He hath occasion for it. And thus the first Christians at *Jerusalem* did; who brought all their Goods into his Treasury: and other Nations afterward made plentiful Oblations, as need required; thereby fulfilling another Prophecy, LXXII. Psal. 10. 15. Unto which *Megadim* may have respect: for such precious things as Silver and Gold, as well as the excellent Fruits of Trees, are called by this name; as may be seen, XXXIII. *Deut.* 13, 14, 15, 16.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The first four Verses belong to the end of the foregoing Chapter; wherein the Spouse continuing her ardent desire to see his Kingdom enlarged, He agrees to it. And then begins (v. 5.) the ninth *and last part of this Sung; in which all the persons speak in their turns. Her Friends admiring her new advancement; and the Spouse declaring the mighty power of love, whereby she had attained it, and hoped to keep it, and was made desirous to propagate it unto those that wanted it, v. 6, 7, 8. Which the Bridegroom favours, v. 9. and they all promising greater industry in his service, He testifies his acceptance of it, and she her longing to see all this accomplished, v. 10, 11, &c.*

Spouse.

Verse 1. O *That thou wert as my brother that sucked the breasts of my mother; when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee, yea, I should not be despised.*] And now, having finished this blessed Work, I hope to enjoy more intimate fellowship with thee. I cannot but wish, at least, to be made so happy as to have thy gracious presence always with me: and, by familiar acquaintance and conversation, to be so united with thee, that I may not be ashamed openly to own my love; but look upon it as an honour to make a publick profession of my relation to Thee. *See* Annot. [*a*].

Ver. 2. *I would lead thee*, and *bring thee into my mothers house*, who *would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate.*] Whereby I would carry the knowledge of Thee from place to place, till I had introduced Thee into the acquaintance of my neareſt Kindred: which would enlarge my knowledge, and make new Discoveries to me; and cause no less joy unto Thee, and unto all the World, to see them give entertainment to Thee. *See* Annot. [*b*].

Ver. 3. *His left hand* should be *under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.*] And, thanks be to his Goodness, I feel Him communicating the power of his Spirit to me: which is the greatest token of his love; and then works most strongly in our hearts, when he sees them fullest of love to Him. *See* Annot. [*c*].

Bridegroom.

Ver. 4. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake* my *love until he please.*] Who, with his wonted care, or rather with a more earnest concern than ever, repeats his charge to my Companions; saying, I conjure you to take heed, lest you discompose, or give the least disturbance to this love: but let it enjoy its satisfaction, to the heighth of its desires. *See* Annot. [*d*]

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Daughters of Jeruſalem.

Ver. 5. (*Who is this that cometh up from the wilderneſs, leaning upon her beloved?*) *I raiſed thee up under the apple-tree: there thy mother brought thee forth, there ſhe brought thee forth that bare thee.*] And who can chuſe but admire at the power of Love! which hath advanced her to ſuch a degree of Greatneſs, that it aſtoniſheth thoſe that behold it, and makes them ſay, Who is this, that out of a low condition, is raiſed to ſuch familiarity with her Beloved, that ſhe leans upon his Arm; being made one with Him, and enjoying all manner of happineſs in his love? Which I have excited towards me, ſaith ſhe, by the pains I took in thy ſervice, when I laboured in the Country-Plantations (VII. 11, 12.) ſuch pains, as thy Mother felt, when ſhe travelled with thee, and brought thee forth out of her Womb. *See* Annot. [*e*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 6. ¶ *Set me as a ſeal upon thine heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm: for love is ſtrong as death, jealouſie is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a moſt vehement flame.*] Place me therefore hereafter ſo near unto thy heart, that I may never ſlip out of thy mind; but conſtantly receive freſh marks and tokens of thy love and favour: Deny not this Suit, which proceeds from moſt fervent love; which can no more be reſiſted than Death, and is as inexorable as the Grave; eſpecially when it flames to the degree of jealouſie, and is afraid of loſing what it loves: Then it inceſſantly torments the Soul, if it be not ſatisfied; it wounds incurably; it burns and rages with ſuch a violent and unextinguiſhable heat, as I feel in my Breaſt, now that it is mightily moved by the Lord. *See* Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, it would utterly be contemned.*] Though Fire may be quenched, yet Love cannot; no, not by the greateſt difficulties, nay, troubles and ſufferings: which though they come pouring in continually, are ſo far from being able to ſuppreſs it, that they cannot abate it; no nor tranſlate it to any other, from the perſon it loves: For, as it is ineſtimable in itſelf, ſo it cannot be purchaſed by Money; nor will they whom it poſſeſſes, part with it for the greateſt Eſtate that they might enjoy without it; but perfectly ſcorn and reject ſuch proffers. *See* Annot. [*g*].

Ver. 8. ¶ *We have a little ſiſter, and ſhe hath no breaſts: what ſhall we do for our ſiſter in the day, when ſhe ſhall be ſpoken for?* And as for thoſe that want it, or in whom it is but juſt kindled, it makes us very ſolicitous what we ſhall do for them: particularly for one that is as dear to us as a Siſter; but of a ſmall growth in this moſt deſirable quality; and therefore not capable of that happineſs which we enjoy: What ſhall we do for her, when it ſhall be ſaid, The time is come that ſhe ſhould be diſpoſed of in Marriage; and yet it ſhall be ſaid withal, that ſhe is not fit for it? *See* Annot. [*h*].

Ver. 9. *If ſhe be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of ſilver: and if ſhe be a door, we will encloſe her with boards of cedar.*] We will not deſpair of her; nor caſt her off; but be both patient with her, and do our utmoſt to make her ſuch as we deſire: Let her but be faithful and conſtant, and we will do for her as we do for a wall that is low; which we pull not down, but build up higher, and adorn alſo with fair and goodly Turrets: or as we do with the door of a noble Houſe; which, if it be too weak or too mean, we ſpare no coſt to mend it, but encloſe in a Caſe of Cedar. *See* Annot. [*i*].

Little Siſter.

Ver. 10. *I am a wall, and my breaſts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*] And our labour, I foreſee, will not be loſt; for I hear her ſay, I am ſuch a Wall; and my Breaſts riſe and grow big like ſuch Turrets: I am no longer of a low and deſpicable Stature, nor unmeet for his love; but from this time forth I ſhall be acceptable unto Him, and find ſuch favour with Him, as to enjoy all the happineſs which He imparts to thoſe that are moſt dear unto Him. *See* Annot. [*k*].

Ver. 11. *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon, he let out the vineyard unto keepers: every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thouſand pieces of ſilver.*] Which I will endeavour to anſwer by my beſt diligence in his ſervice; and from thence ſtill promiſe my ſelf a greater encreaſe of happineſs: For though Great Perſons let out their Lands to others; as King *Solomon* doth the Vineyard he hath in *Baal-hamon* unto ſeveral Tenants, from every one of which he receives a vaſt revenue, beſides the gain which they have to themſelves as a reward of their labour; (v. 12.) *See* Annot. [*l*].

Ver. 12. *My vineyard which* is *mine*, is *before me: thou, O Solomon*, muſt have *a thouſand, and thoſe that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred.*] Yet I will not commit the Vineyard which I am entruſted withal, to the care and management of other perſons; but cultivate it my ſelf, with my utmoſt Induſtry: my own eye ſhall be ever upon it, and I will let nothing be wanting for its improvement; and therefore, if he receive ſo much profit, beſide the benefit that accrues to others, what Fruit may not I expect from a far better Soil than his, and from far greater pains and providence that I will uſe about it? *See* Annot. [*m*].

Bridegroom.

Ver. 13. *Thou that dwelleſt in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cauſe me to hear it?*] Which coming to the ears of her Beloved, He ſaid to her in the preſence of all that waited on her, Thou haſt taken up a worthy reſolution; nothing can be more acceptable to me than that thou fix thy habitation in thy Vineyard; nor canſt thou poſſibly be better employed, to thy own as well as my content, than about the Gardens (VI. 2.) committed to thy Charge: and therefore ask what thou wilt of me, and I tell thee before all thy Companions, who are Witneſſes of what I ſay, I will do it for thee. *See* Annot. [*n*].

Spouſe.

Ver. 14. ¶ *Make haſte, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices.*] I have nothing to deſire but this, that Thou, who art my only Beloved, wouldſt come and accompliſh all theſe things: Make all the ſpeed, that is poſſible, to come and ſave us, and perfect thy loving kindneſs to us; ſuch ſpeed

as

as the ſwifteſt Creatures make to ſave themſelves from danger: Let nothing hinder this; but by thy love, which makes all things ſweet and eaſy, overcome the greateſt difficulties in thy way to us. *See* Annot. [o].

ANNOTATIONS.

[a] *Verſe* 1.] This Verſe, at firſt ſight, looks like a repetition of the ſame deſire wherewith he began this Book; that they might be ſo happy as to ſee the *Meſſiah* appear, though it were but in his infancy; which would tranſport them with joy, *&c.* And thus the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* interprets it, of the time when the *Meſſiah* ſhall be revealed to the Congregation of *Iſrael*.

But if we conſider what follows, it will be more reaſonable to connect it with what went before: and to take it for a moſt ardent expreſſion of love to the perſon before ſpoken of; with a deſire to have more intimate familiarity with him; ſuch as a Siſter hath with a Brother, when he is a ſucking Child; whom, if ſhe met in the Street ſhe would not be aſhamed to take out of his Nurſe's Arms into her own, and openly kiſs; and not imagine ſhe ſhould thereby incur any reproach or contempt.

This ſeems to be the moſt literal ſenſe of the Words; which may be applied to the open profeſſion of Chriſtianity, with the greateſt confidence and ſecurity; nothing being more innocent and harmleſs, than the love and ſervice, wherein it engages its Diſciples to their Lord and Maſter Chriſt. Who the more obedient any perſon is to God's commands, holds that man or woman the dearer to Him; even as dear, as a *Brother, Siſter, or Mother*, XII. *Mat.* 50. Which (ſaith *Grotius* upon that place) is the myſtical ſenſe of the Song of Songs. See more in my Preface.

[b] *V.* 2.] This dear Lord (*i. e.* the knowledge of Him) ſhe deſires here to carry ſtill farther: till ſhe had brought Him into the *houſe*, that is, into the Family of her Mother. Which may be applied unto the deſign of God, to awaken the Jews to believe on Chriſt, by bringing in the *fulneſs*, that is a vaſt number, *of the Gentiles*, XI. *Rom.* 25. Which the Apoſtle ſaith there, *v.* 15. would be *life from the dead*: Unto which the laſt Words of this Verſe may be accommodated.

For after ſhe had ſaid ſhe *would lead him*, or *bring him down*; and then *bring him into the houſe* of her Mother; ſhe adds, *thou ſhalt teach*, or *inſtruct me*. Which agrees with what the Apoſtle there writes, *v.* 12. that if the fall of the Jews was *the riches of the Gentiles*; that is, enriched them with the Treaſures of Divine Wiſdom and Knowledge, how much more would their fulneſs inrich them? If we refer this Clauſe (as we do) to *Mother* beforenamed, the beſt ſenſe I can make of it is this, *By whom I was educated and inſtructed*. And then follows her making Him *drink of ſpiced Wine* (that is, making a great Feaſt for Him, IX. *Prov.* 2. where the moſt excellent Wine made the chiefeſt part of the Entertainment) ſuch Wine as makes thoſe who are aſleep to ſpeak, VII. 9. Which effect, the receiving of the Jews again will produce; as the Apoſtle tells us, when he ſaith, *it ſhall be life from the dead*: i. e. a moſt powerful Argument to enliven the moſt ſtupid Souls, and move them to believe in Chriſt.

Certain it is that *Herakach, ſpiced* or *Aromatick Wine*, denotes its fragrancy or delicious odour; whereby the beſt Wines are diſcerned, as much as by their taſte: and the Word we tranſlate *Juice* ſignifies every where, *Muſte* or *new Wine*: whereby the Prophets ſet forth ſomething that works with greater power and efficacy than ordinary, IX. *Zach.* 17. And here, I doubt not, relates to ſomething new and unuſual: and in the myſtical Application, may ſignifie a greater fulneſs and power of the Spirit, than had been in former days; working like new Wine in the hearts of thoſe that received the Goſpel.

All this is ſaid to be done to *Him*, becauſe, as *Theodoret* noted before, what is done to his Members, he takes as done to himſelf.

[c] *V.* 3.] Who is here repreſented, as immediately condeſcending to her deſires, and fulfilling her wiſhes: vouchſafing a new ſupply of the power of the Spirit, to ſupport and comfort her in thoſe labours of love for his name ſake. Which were ſo great, that ſhe is repreſented here, as ſpent and fainting away. So ſhe had been before, *Chap.* II. 6. where ſee the meaning of theſe Words.

[d] *V.* 4.] This Verſe hath alſo been twice uſed before; with no difference from what we read here, but that now the mention of *Hinds* and *Roes* is left out; and yet he charges them with greater vehemence than ever. For the Hebrew Phraſe here ſignifies, as much as *what do you do? why do you ſtir*, &c. that is, by no means; take heed how you diſturb her. See II. 7. III. 5.

[e] *V.* 5.] This ſeems to be the voice of her Companions, or *Daughters of Jeruſalem*, mentioned in the Verſe before (and begins the laſt part of this Song) admiring the new change they ſaw in her. For ſhe was repreſented before as *coming out of the Wilderneſs* (III. 6.) but not *leaning upon her Beloved*; as ſhe is here. Which ſignifies her advancement unto a ſtate of greater dearneſs to Him, and familiarity with Him.

The Word *mithrappeketh*, is not found elſewhere, and therefore variouſly tranſlated by Interpreters. But moſt agree that it ſignifies, either cloſely *adhering*, or *leaning*, *relying* and *recumbing*, as they ſpeak: which *L. de Dieu* hath ſhown is the uſe of the Word in the Neighbouring Languages. But there are thoſe who think it imports ſomething of pleaſure (and therefore the *Vulgar* takes in that ſenſe with the other; as I have in the Paraphraſe) and tranſlate it *flowing with the delights*. For ſhe having been in the Fields and Villages, viſiting the Vineyards and other places (VII. 11, 12, 13.) is now introduced as coming back from thence, into the Royal City. Which being ſeated on high, in compariſon with the Plains out of which ſhe came, ſhe is ſaid to *aſcend*, or *come up*: but that ſhe might not be tired with the Journey, is repreſented as *leaning upon the arm of her Beloved* (or as ſome will have it, *lying in his boſom*, as St. *John* did in our Saviour's) and

laden with the delicious fruit before-mentioned (VII. 13.) Which excited the admiration of all that knew her, when they beheld the Grace of her Lord towards her; together with her own Beauty, Riches, Ornaments, and Happiness.

The latter part of the Verse, all the *Greek* Fathers take to be the voice of the Bridegroom; and so do many of the *Latines*. But some of them, and all the Hebrew Writers take them to be the Words of the Spouse; because *thee* is of the Masculine Gender. Which soever way we take them, the sense is very hard to find. If we go the first way, the most natural sense seems to be, that He puts her in mind of the poor and mean condition, out of which He had taken her; into a state of the greatest friendship with Him: that she might not be vainly puft up, with the acclamations which were made to her.

But I have followed the Hebrew Points, in my Paraphrase, and understood the Words of *stirring up his love towards her*, when they were looking after the Plantations mentioned, VII. 11, 12. Which was excited by the care and pains she took in that business; like the pains of a Woman in travail: unto which St. *Paul* compares the solicitude and care he had about the *Galatians*, that *Christ might be formed in them*, IV. 19.

Certain it is that *chibbelah* is a Word which relates to the pangs of travailing Women, and therefore the LXX translate it ὠδῖνων: so that if I have not conjectured amiss about the rest, my interpretation of the last Words is natural enough. For *Caph similitudinis* (as they call it) is frequently omitted in the Scripture, and to be supplied by the sense. Twice in this very Book it is wanting, I. 15. VII. 4. *thy eyes are Doves*, that is, as Doves. And in XVII. *Prov.* 21. and in his Father *David*'s Psalms very often, XI. *Psal.* 1. *How say you to my soul, flee a bird*, i. e. as a bird, *to your hill*: and to omit other places, CXIX. 119. *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth, dross*, i. e. *as* or *like* dross.

In like manner I take the last Words of this Verse, *there* (viz. I stirred thee up) *as thy mother travailed in birth with thee*, there, *I say, like her that brought thee forth*: i. e. by such pains as these I raised up thy love to me.

As for what is said by many Interpreters, concerning *Eve*'s eating the Apple in Paradise, and thereby ruining all mankind; there is no reason to think, either that she is the *Mother* here meant, or that *Tappuach* denotes an *Apple*, rather than *Orange*, *Citron* or such like Fruit.

[f] *V.* 6.] These Words also, according to the Hebrew Points, are the Words of the Spouse; beseeching her Beloved to keep her always in his mind, as one very dear to Him. For that was the end of having the Name, or the Picture of a beloved person, engraven on a *Seal*, or *Jewel*, and wearing it next the heart, or upon the arm; that it might testifie their great esteem of such persons, and the constancy of their affection towards them, and that they desired they might never slip out of their memory. See XXII. *Jer.* 24.

Some think here is an allusion to the High-Priest; who carried the names of the Children of *Israel* engraven in Precious Stones, not only upon his Breast, but upon his Shoulders also; as may be seen, XXVIII. *Exod.* 11, 12, 21. and this, *for a memorial before the Lord continually*, v. 29. (Which Interpretation may be confirmed by the Words of the Son of *Syrach*, XLV. *Ecclus.* 11. who saith, *Aaron was adorned with Precious Stones, graven like Seals*). And they think withal, that *Seal upon the heart* relates to the inward affection; and *Seal on the arm*, to the outward expressions of love and esteem.

And then follows the reason of this Prayer; which proceeded from the vehemence of her love, which was grown to the heighth of jealousy (which is nothing but the highest degree of love) lest she should lose Him, as she had been in danger before, *v.* 6, &c.

This love is said to be *as strong as death*: which is admirably expressed by *Maximus Tyrius*, Dissert. X— *wild Beasts are not terrible to it, nor fire, nor precipices, nor the sea, nor the sword, nor the halter*, ἀλλὰ ἤ τι ἄπορα καὶ ἀνυπόστατα, &c. *but even the most unpassable difficulties are got over by it; the hardest things are presently master'd; the most frightful easily surmounted*, &c. it is every where *confident, overlooks all things, overpowers all things*, &c. But none express this like St. *Paul*, VIII. *Rom.* 35, 36, 37, &c.

There is no difficulty but in the last Clause of the Verse (for *as strong as death*, signifies to be insuperable; so *cruel as the grave*, denotes it not to be moved by prayers, and entreaties, or any thing else.) Where the Word *reschapeha* should not be translated, *the coals thereof*, but the *arrows thereof are arrows of fire*. That is, It shoots into the heart, wounds it, and burns there; nay, inflames it vehemently by the wounds it gives: as the Reverend and Learned Dr. *Hammond* hath observed upon LXXVI. *Psal.* 3. And so the LXX seem here to understand it, when they translate it πτέρυγα αὐτῆς, *its Feathers, or Wings, wherewith it flies*, are *Wings of fire*. Which Wings or Arrows of Fire, are said, in the last Words of all, to be a *most vehement flame*, or rather it should be thus translated, *which are the flames of the fire of the Lord*. So the Hebrew Word seems to signifie, being compounded of *three* Words, *fire, flame*, and *the Lord*: denoting mighty and exceeding scorching flames. Such compositions are not only to be found in other parts of the Bible II. *Jer.* 31. but in the Punick Language also, as *Bochartus* shows in his *Canaan*, L. II. C. 15. Some translate it, *Such flames are kindled only by the Lord*. And then, if there be an allusion to the Breast-plate of the High Priest, in the beginning of the Verse, I fansie the conclusion may allude to the *fire that went out from before the Lord*, IX. *Lev.* 24. and devoured the Sacrifices, as Love doth all manner of difficulties. This Fire was to burn perpetually upon the Altar, and never be suffered to go out, VI. *Lev.* 12. and therefore the best Emblem of love that could be found.

[g] *V.* 7.] For it is unextinguishable as it here follows, *Many waters cannot quench love*. Which is a Metaphor, whereby prophane Authors also have set forth the mighty, unconquerable power of love. —— ἐ κακὸν τοῦτο, &c. *What new kind of conflagration is this?* (saith *Philostratus* in one of his Epistles) *I am ready to call for water, and there is none to bring it*, ἐν τῷ

Cccc

Ἐξαίρετον ἐς παντὸς τοῦ φλόγα ἐμφύσαντος, *for a Quencher of this fire, is the most impossible to be found. If one bring it from the Fountain, or if he take it out of the River, it is all one; for the water it self is burnt up by love.*

By *many waters* are sometimes meant, in Scripture, *many afflictions* (as is very well known) which they that love, frequently endure, before they can accomplish their desire. But though there should be an *inundation* of them, we are here told, they cannot *overwhelm*, or *overflow* it; as the Word we translate *drown'd* signifies: but it will still live and be uppermost, and prevail.

And such is its constancy, and satisfaction also which it hath in its own pleasures, it regards not riches at all; but will rather be poor with one whom it affects, than enjoy great possessions with another person. Nay, it despises, and that with disdain, the offers of a man's whole Estate; if that condition be imposed, of forsaking its love. Others may laugh, perhaps, at such persons; but, it is all one, they smile at them again. So *Theodoret* and the LXX understand the latter part of this Verse, *if a man give away all his substance in Charity, they will extremely dispise him.* That is, saith he, they that spend all they have, and their very lives, for the love of God, are set at nought by those that want such love. Other Interpretations of these Words I have expressed in the Paraphrase.

[b] *V.* 8.] Here is another property of Divine Love, which makes us solicitous for those that want it; or have but the beginnings of it, and may be in danger to lose them. And this seems to be the Speech of the Spouse to her Companions, who were all troubled for a *Sister* (that is, some Church) which was of a small growth, and had *no Breasts*; that is, was not ripe for Marriage. For all have Breasts; but they do not rise and swell, till they are of such an Age, that they may be called *Women*, XVI. *Ezek.* 7. They enquire therefore what they should do for her, *in the day when she shall be spoken for?* that is, demanded in marriage. Or *when there shall be speech concerning her*; that is, concerning this defect of hers.

[f] *V.* 9.] Here He returns an Answer to that Question: which is, that He and they will take the greater care for her; to raise her stature, and to bring her to perfection. For where there are good beginnings, we are not wont to forsake them: but rather to add to them and improve them. As for example, the Wall of a Building which we esteem, we do not suffer to fall to the ground, but strengthen and raise it: nay, adorn it sometimes and beautifie it with Towers and Pinacles; which we stick not to gild, that they may appear more gloriously. Or if it be a Door of a House, which we value, we let it not decay; but rather case it with Boards of *Cedar*, to make it more durable, as well as neat and handsome: for *Cedar* is not apt to putrefie.

This seems to me the most simple Exposition of these Words; and I do not think fit to trouble the Reader with that vast variety, which may be found in Interpreters. But only add, that they may very naturally be applied unto a Soul, or a Church in a state of imperfection; but built upon Christ the Foundation: in this manner, *Let her but be firm and constant, like a Wall, in her love to me, and I will not abandon the care of her; let her but exclude all other, and open to me alone, and she shall never want any thing necessary to her perfection: for I will richly adorn her, and make her like the House of God Himself; which is lined with Cedar.*

[k] *V.* 10.] And then this Verse, may be thus applied (being her Answer) *I am resolved to do what thou requirest (to be stedfast and faithful) and already perceive thereward of my fidelity*, &c. For these Words plainly relate to the foregoing, as I have expressed in the Paraphrase: unto which I shall add nothing; for if that be admitted, there is no difficulty in them. It being known to every Body, that *shalom*, *peace*, signifies all manner of happiness in the Hebrew Language: which is included also in our *English* Word *favour*, whereby we here translate it. For it signifies all the good things, that may be expected from the favour He bears to any person.

[l] *V.* 11.] And being thus *favoured* by Him, she now promises her diligence (in this and the next Verse) to do Him the best service, and to make the greatest improvements she could of the Talents committed to her. For though *Solomon* (she here saith) let out his Vineyard, which he had in *Baal hamon*, a place near *Jerusalem*, as *Aben Ezra* tells us (which is followed by most Interpreters, few thinking it to be near *Engaddi*) where abundance of people had Vineyards, and he a very large one: for it being let to several Farmers, every one paid him a *thousand pieces of Silver*, i. e. Shekels (as much as to say, it brought him in a vast revenue yearly; for a *thousand* is a Summ of perfection, CXLIV. *Psal.* 13. V. *Micah* 1. and other places, and the number of Farmers or Tenants, though not expressed, some think, to be *ten*) yet she takes up another resolution; which she expresses in the next Verse.

[m] *V.* 12.] Where she saith she will her self look after the Vineyard committed to her trust; and not leave it to the care of others. Which seems to be the meaning of the first Phrase in this Verse, *My Vineyard which I have is before me*, i. e. is under my eye (as we speak) and special care. Thus God's Judgments are said to be before *David*, XVIII. *Psal.* 22. that is, He took great care never to swerve from them.

It amounts also to the same sense, if we take this Phrase to signifie as much, *as it is in my power*, XLVII. *Gen.* 5. XL. *Jer.* 4. For then the meaning is, she kept it in her own hand, or occupation; and did not farm it out to others. And then the last part of the Verse signifies, that if *Solomon* made such a profit of his Vineyard, as that beforenamed (besides *two hundred* Shekels; which each of the Farmers got over and above for their pains) though he did not dress it himself; what would be the encrease, that she was likely to make by her own care and diligence in the business. That is, it was incredible what fruit she would reap by her pains: according to that of the Son of *Syrach*, XXIV. *Ecclus.* 31, *&c. I said I will water my*

best Garden, and I will water abundantly my Garden-Bed, and lo, my Brook became a River, and my River became Sea, &c.

This seems to me the most natural sense of these two difficult Verses; which *Almonazir* suggested to my thoughts. And that *Solomon*, not any other person, is here intended, *Maimonides* himself agrees; who in his Treatise of the *Foundation of the Law*, C. VII. hath these Words: *Wheresoever you meet with the name of* Solomon, *in the Book of* Canticles, *it is holy; as the rest of the names there are: save only in that place, a thousand are to thee, O* Solomon, *&c.* Others also add that place, III. *Cant.* 7. *Behold the bed which is* Solomon's, *&c.* Where the Masters say, it is a common name, as well as here.

These two Verses are ingeniously applied by some, to the far greater encrease of knowledge and goodness in the *Church*, than in the *Synagogue*: that is by Christianity, than by Judaism.

[n] *V.* 13.] This Verse, according to the Hebrew Points, is the voice of the *Bridegroom*: who seems to commend the resolution she made, in the foregoing Verse. And he calling her *the inhabitant of the gardens* (which are the same with the *Vineyard* before mentioned) it signifies her perpetual care about their prosperity. In recompence of which He bids her, before they finish this interview, to ask what she will of Him, and it shall be done for her. Which, in short, is the summ of what the same *Almonazir* hath long ago conjectured to be the sense of this place.

[o] *V.* 14.] Unto which she returns her Answer, in these Words; and so shuts up this Song. Which seems to me to conclude as it began; with a desire that the *Messiah* would come, and make good all those things, that had been represented in these raptures.

The Word *berach* which we translate *make haste*, is twice translated by the LXX διωκουσα, to *go* or *run thorow*, to the very end. XXVI. *Exod.* 28. XXXVI. 33. And no doubt, denotes here most vehement and restless endeavours, in a speedy course: like that of a *Roe Buck*, or *wild Goat* rather; whose agility, both in running and jumping is celebrated by all Authors, and said to be such as is scarce credible.

The *young hart* (called here *opher*) is still more swift and nimble than the old: the exceeding great fear wherein it is, adding Wings (as we speak) to its feet. Whence *Xenophon* saith, there is nothing comparable to their swiftness, when the old ones are absent, and they are pursued by Dogs: ὁπόταν ἐλαφοι ὦσι, *&c.* then there is no speed like to that of such young Harts, as his Words are quoted by *Bochartus*.

Who well observes (L. III. C. XVII. Part. 1 *de Animal.*) that the sense of the last Words (*upon the mountains*, &c.) is to be made out by adding one Word, in this manner, *Be thou like the young Harts running* (or *when they run*) *upon the mountains of spices*, i. e. the Mountains where Spices grow; such as those mentioned IV. 6. Such perhaps was *Bether*, II. 17. (where we meet with these Words before) and I have sometime thought, that they should be so translated here, *the Mountains of Besamin*; as there the Mountains of *Bether*.

But what these Mountains were we are now ignorant, though this is certain, that the Creatures here mentioned were bred in the highest Mountains of the Country; as *Ælian* testifies in the latter end of his *fifth* Book: *The Harts in* Syria *are bred in their highest Mountains*, Amanus, Libanus, *and* Carmel. For there they were safest and most secure from danger; there it was difficult to pursue them, especially when they climbed up the steepest places. And therefore the *Psalmist* and the Prophet *Habakkuk*, when they would represent themselves as in a state of perfect security, say God had *made their feet like hinds feet, and made them to walk upon their* (*bamoth*) *high places*, XVIII. *Psal.* 33. III. *Hab.* ult. Which Words allude to the inaccessible Mountains, which those Creatures frequented; especially the Females, that they might there secure their young ones. Besides, as there they could feed and bring forth their young most securely; so there was the sweetest feeding.

In short, *Solomon* here seems to long for the first coming of the *Messiah*, as St. *John* doth for his last: who concludes his Book of the *Revelation* in the same manner as *Solomon* doth this: saying, *Come, Lord Jesus*, XXII. Revel. 20.

There are those who fansie that in the foregoing Verse the Bridegroom asks her consent, for the perfecting their love in Marriage; and desires her in the audience of her Companions to lift up her voice and sing the *Nuptial Hymn*: Which she now, say they, in this Verse professes her self to be ready to do; if He would but be present with her, and assist and direct her to do it aright. And then it is thus applied and paraphrased by the forenamed *Almonazir*.

Thou commandest me that I should with Morning and Evening Hymns and Songs celebrate thy Omnipotent Wisdom and Goodness, &c. vouchsafe then speedily to adjoin the eternal force and flame of thy Holy Spirit unto my voice; that in spirit, and truth, and sanctity of heart, I may sing thy praises: and not only with my mouth and sound; but in my mind and heart especially, worthily worship thy incomprehensible Majesty.

Whence it is, that the Church, being moved by a Divine Inspiration, saith thus in all her Prayers.

O Lord, open Thou our lips:
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Amen.

FINIS.